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THE MAKERS OF CANADA

VOL. XIII

EGERTON RYERSON

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BY

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PREFACE

THIS book does not profess to be either a minute biography or a detailed history. It is the presentation to our countrymen of the various aspects of the work of a great man who has left his impress upon several of the important institutions of our province, and in each case for good. In these sketches we have made no attempt, except in the first brief chapter, to trace the record, either of his personal or public life, or the development of his character, or the lessons which might be gathered from the example of his life. We have rather considered his work as one of the makers of Canada, and necessarily with that, something of the great movements of the days in which he lived. The subject is a noble one, and we must acknowledge that we have done it but scant justice.

The volume is the product of joint labour with my life-long friend and colleague, Dr. A. H. Reynar. He has specially prepared the first chapter

dealing with the early life and ministry of Dr. Ryerson, and the eleventh, dealing with the literary work of Dr. Ryerson.

We must both acknowledge our constant indebtedness to the indefatigable labours of Dr. J. George Hodgins, LL.D. The rich storehouse of historic material which he is accumulating in his many works will place all future labourers in this field under lasting obligations.

With the hope that our work may prove useful to the thousands who in our schools are now reaping the advantages of Dr. Ryerson's labours, we commit it to our fellow-citizens of Ontario.

N. BURWASH.

Victoria College, *Feb. 28th, 1901.*

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CHAPTER I

EARLY LIFE AND MINISTRY

IN his book entitled "The Story of My Life," Dr. Ryerson speaks thus of his birth and parentage: "I was born on March 24th, 1803, in the township of Charlotteville, near the village of Vittoria, in the then London district, now the county of Norfolk. My father had been an officer in the British army during the American Revolution, being a volunteer in the Prince of Wales' Regiment of New Jersey, of which place he was a native. His forefathers were from Holland, and his more remote ancestors were from Denmark. At the close of the American revolutionary war, he, with many others of the same class, went to New Brunswick, where he married my mother, whose maiden name was Stickney, a descendant of one of the early Massachusetts Puritan settlers. Near the close of the last century, my father with his family followed an elder brother to Canada, where he drew some 2,500 acres of land from the government for his services in the army, besides his pension."

Believers in the strong influence of heredity will say that the child of such parents should inherit a nature, sturdy, militant, and loyal on the one hand,

and on the other hand, earnest, inward and devout. Those again who magnify the influence of nurture in the making of the man will find support for their view in the following statement of this man, so distinguished as one of the makers of Canada: "That to which I am principally indebted for any studious habits, mental energy, or even capacity or decision of character, is religious instruction, poured into my mind in my childhood by a mother's counsels, and infused into my heart by a mother's prayers and tears. When very small, under six years of age, having done something naughty, my mother took me into her bed-room, told me how bad and wicked what I had done was and what pain it caused her, kneeled down, clasped me to her bosom and prayed for me. Her tears, falling upon my head, seemed to penetrate to my very heart. This was my first religious impression, and was never effaced. Though thoughtless and full of playful mischief, I never afterwards knowingly grieved my mother, or gave her other than respectful and kind words." Such is the beautiful tribute that the old man, full of years and honours, pays to the mother that looked on his childhood.

> "Happy he
> With such a mother! Faith in womankind
> Beats in his blood, and trust in all things high
> Comes easy to him, and though he trip and fall,
> He shall not blind his soul with clay."

Whatever heredity alone may do or fail to do, and

however the influences of early training alone may make or mar the man, it is impossible to think that the nature and the nurture that combined to bless the early life of Egerton Ryerson could fail to lead him to a place amongst the great and good.

The life of the first settler is sometimes described as a life of many hardships and few privileges. But except in a few cases and for a short time, the hardships were not more than enough to make the people hardy, and their privations were less dangerous and hurtful than the ease and plenty that so often leave the body and the mind without struggle, and therefore without strength. And as for the comparative dearth of instruction in the early times, it may be doubted whether the present generation, beschooled and bechurched as it often is, and oppressed with the surfeit and disgust of learning, has after all so great an advantage over the people of the earlier time. Then, the schools and the churches may have been few and far between, but there was a better relish and digestion of the simpler moral and intellectual fare. It was in those times of hard work and few privileges that the boyhood of Egerton Ryerson was passed. He tells us that he learned to do all kinds of farm work. And before he had reached his majority he "ploughed every acre of ground for the season, cradled every stalk of wheat, rye, and oats, and mowed every spear of grass, pitched the whole first on a wagon, and then from the wagon to the hay-mow or stack." Well might he look

back without regret to the hardships of his youth, if they built up the well-knit frame and much-enduring strength that marked his manhood and his age.

The story of Egerton Ryerson's school days is not long. He had such advantages from the district grammar school as might be had in those days by a boy who was at the same time learning "to do all kinds of farm work," and when he was fourteen years of age he was sent to attend a course of lectures "given by two professors, the one an Englishman and the other an American, who taught nothing but English grammar." Into this study he threw himself with great enthusiasm, and he made such progress that his instructors were glad to secure his help as a teacher when one of them was incapacitated by illness. In this way the chief maker of the Ontario school system tried his prentice hand as a teacher when a lad of only fifteen summers. Further instruction from teachers was not given him in his boyhood, but as soon as he reached his majority and had the direction of his own life, he sought for himself the best help available in the pursuit of learning. In the story of his life he writes: "I felt a strong desire to pursue further my classical studies, and determined, with the kind counsel and aid of my eldest brother, to proceed to Hamilton and place myself for a year under the tuition of a man of high reputation both as a scholar and a teacher, the late John Law, Esq., then headmaster of the

Gore district grammar school. I applied myself with such ardour, and prepared such an amount of work, both in Latin and Greek, that Mr. Law said it was impossible for him to give the time and hear me read all that I had prepared, and that he would therefore examine me on the translation and construction of the more difficult passages, remarking more than once that it was impossible for any human mind to sustain long the strain that I was imposing upon mine. In the course of some six months his apprehensions were realized, as I was seized with a brain fever, and on partially recovering took cold, which resulted in inflammation of the lungs, by which I was so reduced that my physician pronounced my case hopeless, and death was hourly expected." From this illness he slowly recovered, thanks to his good constitution and to his mother's care. He took up his classical studies again, but almost immediately afterwards began his work as a Methodist preacher. This is all the story of the schooling received by one who for so many years, and with so great distinction at home and abroad, directed, and indeed created, the school system of Ontario.

The story of the moral development of a young life is always interesting, but it is peculiarly so in the case of a man who may be regarded as a type. Such a man was the subject of this memoir. He furnishes an example of the development of the religious life in one who has grown up under the

influences of Christian nurture, and at the same time an example of the way in which that life is unfolded under the conditions found in the great religious body to which he belonged, and to which his talents and energies were given as an honoured leader for nearly three score years. We have already seen what he tells us of the religious influences and impressions of his childhood. At the age of twelve, when the passive and receptive stage is rising into the stage of more serious reflection and more active self-determination, he passed into a higher form of religious life, a life in which he not merely accepted the traditional teachings as to sin and salvation, but realized in his own soul the profound interests of the moral life, and bravely took up its struggle, trusting all the issues of this life and of the great hereafter to the High God and to Jesus Christ, who had made His mercy known. He tells of the change that took place in these words: "My consciousness of guilt and sinfulness was humbling, oppressive and distressing; and my experience of relief, after lengthened fastings, watchings, and prayers, was clear, refreshing, and joyous. In the end I simply trusted in Christ and looked to Him for a present salvation; and as I looked up in my bed the light appeared to my mind, and, as I thought, to my bodily eye also, in the form of one, white-robed, and with more of the expression of the countenance of Titian's Christ than of any person I have ever seen. I turned, rose to my knees, bowed my head .

and covered my face, rejoiced with trembling, saying to a brother who was lying beside me that the Saviour was now near us. The change within was more marked than anything without, and perhaps the inward change may have suggested what appeared an outward manifestation."

It may be interesting to compare this experience with that of Thomas Carlyle, who at about the same time was passing through the pangs of a belated and abnormal spiritual birth. He tells the story in the *Sartor Resartus*, and he says it actually took place in his own experience. "The heart within me, unvisited by any heavenly dewdrop, was smouldering in sulphurous, slow-consuming fire. . . . I lived in a continual, indefinite, pining fear. . . . It seemed as if all things in the heavens above and in the earth beneath would hurt me. . . . When all at once there rose a thought in me, and I asked myself: 'What art thou afraid of? Wherefore, like a coward, dost thou forever pip and whimper, and go cowering and trembling? Despicable biped! What is the sum total of the worst that lies before thee? Death? Well, death, and say the pangs of Tophet too, and all that the devil and man may, will, or can do against thee! Hast thou not a heart; canst thou not suffer whatever it be; and, as a child of freedom, though outcast, trample Tophet itself under thy feet, while it consumes thee?' . . . And as I so thought, there rushed like a stream of fire over my whole soul; and I shook base fear away

from me forever. . . . The everlasting No had said: 'Behold thou art fatherless, outcast, and the universe is mine (the devil's);' to which my whole Me now made answer: 'I am not thine, but free, and forever hate thee!'" Elsewhere Carlyle writes: "Foreshadows—call them rather fore-splendours—of that truth, that beginning of truths, fell mysteriously over my soul. . . . The universe is not dead and demoniacal, a charnel-house with spectres, but God-like, and my Father's!"

It is of this experience that Carlyle says, "I found it to be essentially what Methodist people call their conversion—the deliverance of their souls from the devil and the pit. Precisely that in a new form. And there burned accordingly a sacred flame of joy in me, silent in my inmost being, as of one henceforth superior to fate. This *holy joy* lasted sensibly in me for several years. . . . . nor has it proved what I can call fallacious at any time since." Carlyle was wont to assure his pious mother that his opinions, although clothed in a different garb, remained essentially the same as her own, and we may well believe him for he would lie to no man and he could not lie to his mother. But in comparing the experience of what he calls his new birth with that of Egerton Ryerson, we must remember that the one was a rugged man, hard-headed and metaphysical, and a worshipper of will and force, whilst the other was a bright but unsophisticated boy who followed without doubting

his moral intuitions and affections and recognized the eternal goodness in the Son of Man. The one was like an oak tree that grew alone, through the scorching heat of summer and the winter's cold and tempests, the other was like a pine tree that grew tall and shapely in the forest.

This story of the moral and spiritual development of Egerton Ryerson has a historical as well as a psychological interest. It is an example of the change that usually attended the ministrations of the pioneer preachers, and its presence or absence is still looked upon amongst Methodists as the sign of a standing or falling church. In telling the story some of the converts, especially in later times, use language less intense and striking than that of Egerton Ryerson, and others use language almost as mystical and imaginative as that of Carlyle, but the essential things are always the same and in harmony with the inwardness of the Great Apostle's preaching, "repentance towards God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ."

The circumstances of the early settlers and their habits of life and thought were in some respects most favourable to the work of the first preachers. The lives of the people were simple, laborious and comparatively free from the distractions and dissipations of later times. They had no relish for the fine-spun and mystifying speculations that so often befog and enervate the mind. They had not learned to question the truthfulness of the intuitive reason,

and they no more called for logical demonstrations of the Good than for logical demonstrations of the Beautiful. Their intellectual palate had not been vitiated and their digestion spoiled by daily doses of newspaper omniscience or by a supping of the devil's broth in low comedy and fiction. Whatsoever things commended themselves to their simple minds as lovely and of good report, those things were beautiful and good to them beyond all dispute. And they must either revere and obey or feel that they were in opposition to the Eternal order. When, therefore, the pioneer preacher came to those people, he found the way open to their hearts and minds. And the preachers were, as a rule, men of the people, and they knew their hearers though they did not always know Greek. They preached the facts of the inner life and of the gospel of the grace of God, rather than theories about the facts and the gospel; and above all things, they sought to help the people to the supreme moral choice which brought inward peace and supplied a fixed principle of life.

A passing notice may here be given to the scenes of the early religious experiences and labours of the first makers of this country. Except in the cities and towns a regular religious service seldom occurred more than once a week. In many places it would take two or three or even six weeks before the pioneer preacher could complete his round of hundreds of miles. But when the work of the year

was slack and the weather favourable, special religious services were held as if to compensate for the usual dearth of religious privileges. In the larger places what were called "protracted services" were held, when evening after evening for two or three weeks the preacher and his helpers brought all their powers of instruction and persuasion to bear on their hearers. These services were commonly held in the winter season; but in the pleasant summer weather, between the spring work and the harvest there were held in the sparsely settled districts camp meetings, when for a week or ten days the people would dwell in tents and give themselves to religious exercises. They would then return to their homes, some of them to have few opportunities for public worship for the rest of the year. As the places for regular religious services multiplied, these protracted meetings and camp meetings gradually fell into disuse, but in the old time they often served a good purpose.

Returning from these observations on the religious life of Canada in the early days, observations intended to show something of the environment in which Egerton Ryerson grew up, we resume the story of his own life on the religious side. From his thirteenth to his eighteenth year, no events of much note are put on record. When, however, at the age of eighteen he formally joined the Methodist Church, he was met by his father with these words: "Egerton, I understand you have joined the

Methodists. You must either leave them or leave my house." The military spirit of his early habits seems to have followed the father into his domestic life, and the young man knew him too well to expect that there would be any change in the word of command. But the son too was a good soldier when called upon to endure hardness for what he considered a sacred cause. His decision was soon made, and the next day he left his father's roof to begin the struggle of life on his own account. "In this trying time," he says, "I had the aid of a mother's prayers and a mother's tenderness, and a conscious divine strength according to my need." It is a further mark of his noble character that he utters no word of reproach or bitterness on account of treatment he had received, but to the end of his life speaks words of tenderness and reverence for his father.

For the next two years he was employed as an assistant in the London district grammar school and at the same time he diligently pursued his own studies. The bent of his mind even at this early period is seen in the character of the works that he read with greatest interest:—"Locke, 'On the Human Understanding'; Paley's 'Moral and Political Philosophy,' and Blackstone's 'Commentaries,' especially the sections of the latter on the Prerogatives of the Crown, the Rights of the Subject and the Province of Parliament."

His return for a year to his father's home and his

selection of a course of life for himself may best be told in his own words:

"As my father had complained that the Methodists had robbed him of his son, and of the fruits of that son's labours, I wished to remove that ground of complaint as far as possible by hiring an English farm-labourer, then just arrived in Canada, in my place, and paid him out of the proceeds of my own labour for two years. But although the farmer was the best hired man my father had ever had, the result of his farm productions during these two years did not equal those of the two years that I had been the chief labourer on the farm, and my father came to me one day uttering the single sentence: 'Egerton, you must come home,' and then walked away. . . . I had left home for the honour of religion, and I thought the honour of religion would be promoted by my returning home and showing still that the religion so much spoken against would enable me to leave the school for the plough and the harvest field, as it had enabled me to leave home without knowing at the moment whether I should be a teacher or a farm-labourer. I relinquished my engagement as a teacher within a few days, engaging again on the farm. . . . My father then became changed in regard both to myself and the religion I professed, desiring me to remain at home; but having been enabled to maintain a good conscience in the sight of God, and a good report before men in regard to my filial duty during

my minority, I felt that my life's work lay in another direction." What that other direction was he does not tell us in the story of his life, but his love for the study of political philosophy and constitutional law, and the quality of mind exhibited throughout his life, incline us to think that the legal profession was the one to which he was attracted. However that may be, his first care was to qualify himself for his life's work by a better intellectual equipment and discipline. In those good old times the study of the classics was the approved method of preparation for all professional life. The young man accordingly placed himself under the tuition of the best scholar and teacher within his reach, and applied himself to his classical studies with great zeal and success. But as we have already seen, his zeal was not according to knowledge, for the close hard work induced brain fever and led to further illness from which it was thought he would not recover.

During his illness, and in the prospect of death—a prospect not dreaded at the time,—he looked again over his plans of life and asked himself what might have been, and again what ought to be if his life should be prolonged. Then he resolved that he would not follow his own counsels, but "would yield to the openings and calls which might be made in the church by its chief ministers." With this resolve, peace and joy came to his mind and healing to his body, so that his mother, entering his

room soon after, exclaimed: "Egerton, your countenance is changed: you are getting better." He recovered, to the surprise of his friends, and in due time resumed his classical studies at Hamilton. A few days later he went to attend a religious service where his brother William was expected to preach. His brother, however, did not appear at the appointed time, being prevented by serious illness, and the young student was suddenly called upon by the authorities of the church to take his brother's place in the ministry for the rest of the year. He was astonished, and for a time speechless from emotion, but, as St. Paul was "not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" which appeared unto him to make him "a minister and a witness," so did this young Canadian student at the call of the church give up his early plans and take upon himself the care of souls. His first sermon was preached on Easter Sunday, April 3rd, 1825, and his text was: "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."—Psa. 126: 5.

The brief records of his early ministry contained in the young preacher's diary throw much light on the condition of the country and the habits of the people in the first half of the last century. At the same time they reveal the spirit of the men who, in the heroic days gone by, attempted and achieved great things for God and for their country. Our respect for those men is none the less but rather greater because they did not think that they were great men or imagine that they were attempting

extraordinary things. They thought humbly of themselves, they felt the weaknesses and limitations of mortal men, but through all the changes of feeling and through good report and ill, they persisted in the brave endeavour to do their duty. They were without the smug content that sometimes marks the clever men of an inferior grade. They rather felt—and felt most painfully at times—the depression of the truly great who realize how little they know as compared with what they have yet to learn, and how imperfect are their best works as compared with the ideals towards which they struggle and aspire. The following brief extracts from his diary will tell of the young itinerant's character and labours with simple eloquence:

"*April 3rd, 1825 (Easter Sunday).*—I this day commenced my ministerial labours. . . . Oh, my soul, hang all thy hopes upon the Lord! Forbid that I should seek the praise of men, but may I seek their good and God's glory. . . ."

"*April 8th.*—The Lord being my helper, my little knowledge and feeble talents shall be unreservedly devoted to His service. I do not yet regret giving up my worldly pursuits for the welfare of souls. . . ."

"*April 10th (Sabbath).*—. . . . I felt much of the presence of the Lord, and I do bless the Lord he has converted one soul in this place to-day. I feel encouraged to go on."

"*April 15th.*—So bowed down with temptation

to-day I almost resolved to return to my native place. But, in God's strength, I will try to do my best during the time I have engaged to supply my brother William's place."

"*April 25th and 26th.*—And thus I go on, depressed and refreshed; almost discouraged because of the way, and then cheered by the kind and fatherly conversation of the Rev. Thomas Madden."

"*May 12th.*—I have this day ridden nearly thirty miles, preached three times and met two classes. I felt very much fatigued, yet the Lord has given me strength equal to my day."

"*May 19th.*—. . . . Since I commenced labouring for my Master I have found fathers and mothers, brothers and sisters, all ready to supply my every want."

"*May 29th.*—For many days I have been cast down by a weight of care. My father is exceedingly anxious that I should return home and remain with him during his lifetime. A position in the Church of England has presented itself, and other advantageous attractions with regard to this world offer themselves. It makes my heart bleed to see the anxiety of my parents. But is it my duty? If they were in want I would return to them without hesitation, but when I consider they have everything necessary, can it be my duty to gratify them at the expense of the cause of God? Surely if a man may leave father and mother to join himself to a wife, how much more reasonable to leave all

to join himself to the Christian ministry! My parents are dear to me, but my duty to God is dearer still. One thing I do desire, that I may live in the house of the Lord forever.[1] And shall I leave a church through whose faithful instructions I have been brought to know God for any advantages that the entrance of another might afford me? No, far be it from me. As I received the Lord Jesus, so I will walk in Him. . . ."

"*August 10th.*—My soul rejoices at the news I have heard from home, that my eldest brother (George) has resolved to join the Methodists and become a missionary to the Indians. . . . My father has become reconciled, and my mother is willing to part with her sons for the sake of the church of Christ."

In September, 1825, Mr. Ryerson was appointed an assistant preacher on the York and Yonge street circuit. This circuit comprised the town of York (now Toronto) and the surrounding country, "over which," he says, "we travelled, and preached from twenty-five to thirty-five sermons in four weeks, preaching generally three times on Sabbath, and attending three class meetings, besides preaching and attending class meetings on week days."

[1] It is worthy of note just here that Colonel Ryerson lived to an advanced age, and died in 1854. If, therefore, his son had at this time (1825) considered his filial emotions only and not also the work to which he was called, he would have waited for twenty-nine years to bury his father, and his duty to his church and country would have been left undone.

In the early part of the following year (April and May 1826) these labours of the intinerant preacher, excessive and exhausting as they must appear, were greatly increased by the controversy that arose on the question of the Clergy Reserves and by his defence of his co-labourers and co-religionists from the ungenerous and unjust charges brought against them by their privileged ecclesiastical opponents. In the next chapter the origin of this controversy will be explained and the story told of Egerton Ryerson's valiant championship of the cause of religious liberty and equal rights. It was not of choice that he engaged in controversy, but he was constrained by the urgent appeals of those who felt themselves wronged to undertake their defence. Again and again he tells of his preference for the care of souls and the preaching of the gospel. At the same time we may be allowed to think that his soldierly ancestral instincts found a certain satisfaction in the fray when he was once committed to it, and when he knew that he was fighting for a good cause. His controversial life seems to have been guided throughout by the precept of the old councillor in *Hamlet*,—

> "Beware
> Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
> Bear't that the opposed may beware of thee."

There was another conflict, however, into which he threw himself with all the generous enthusiasm of a good soldier. His arduous pastoral duties and

his exciting theological and semi-political controversies did not so engross him as to prevent the outgoing of his heart and mind in sympathy with those who were in greatest need of light and help, viz., the heathen aborigines of the country who were then very numerous. So strongly did he feel on this matter that he resolved to give his life to these poor people; to turn aside and share their affliction and poverty rather than go out to meet the comfort and distinction that appeared before him on another path. The following quotation from his diary will reveal his mind on this matter:

"*August 17th.*—Scarcely a day passes without beholding new openings to extend my ministerial labours. To-day, in an affecting manner, I witnessed the hands of suffering humanity stretched forth to receive the word of life. More than five hundred aborigines of the country were assembled in one place. In a moral point of view they may be said to be 'sitting in the valley of the shadow of death.' 'The day star from on high' has not yet dawned upon them. Alas! are they to perish for lack of knowledge? . . . Oh, Lord, if Thou wilt qualify me and send me to dispense to them the Bread of Life, I will throw myself upon Thy mercy and submit to Thy will!"

In accordance with this desire, Mr. Ryerson received an appointment as missionary to the Indians at the Credit, but at the same time he was required to preach on two Sundays out of four

in the town of York. He commenced his work among the Indians in the middle of September, 1826. That he endured some hardness may be gathered from his account of his place of abode. "In one of these bark-covered and brush-enclosed wigwams, I ate and slept for some weeks, my bed consisting of a plank, a mat, and a blanket, and a blanket also for my covering; yet I was never more comfortable and happy." The spirit of chivalry in which he entered upon this work is clearly seen in his diary when he says, "I feel an inexpressible joy in taking up my abode with them. I must acquire a new language to teach a new people."

The practical nature of his work is seen in his immediate effort to lift the people out of their heathenish degradation into a higher state where the comfortable environment of a Christian civilization might foster the moral and intellectual life of a people just emerging from paganism. And the energy and perseverance of this young missionary and maker of his country is seen in the fact that in less that ten days after his arrival amongst the Indians, they resolved to build a house "to answer the double purpose of a school house and a place for divine worship." The Indians under his charge were about two hundred in number, and very poor, but they entered with enthusiasm into the new enterprise. They subscribed one hundred dollars towards the building in less than an hour. The missionary mounted his horse and visited

his old friends in Hamilton, and in the York and Yonge street and Niagara circuits, and begged the rest of the money required. At the end of six weeks the house was built and paid for. All this was done, as he says, with a touch of humour, "while our 'swell' friends of the government and of the Church of England were consulting and talking about the matter. It was thus that the church-standing of these Indian converts was maintained, and they were enabled to walk in the Lord Jesus as they had found Him."

The methods of missionary work followed by Mr. Ryerson some five and seventy years ago, were of the most modern and approved kind and worthy of imitation by the missionaries of the present day. He did not take his stand on a height of privilege and attainment and call to the people, bidding them to come up to him, but he came down to them and helped them to ascend. He shared their humble dwellings, lived on their homely fare, and, like the Divine Teacher, he too became poor that through his poverty his heathen brethren might become rich. Writing to one of his brothers he says: "I am very unpleasantly situated at the Credit during the cold weather, as there are nearly a dozen in the family, and only one fire-place. I have lived at different houses among the Indians, and thereby learned some of their wants, and the proper remedies for these. Having no place for retirement, and living in the midst of bustle and

noise, I have forgotten a good deal of my Greek and Latin and made but little progress in other things. My desire and aim is to live solely to the glory of God and the good of men." Again he writes in his diary, "I have been often quite unwell, owing to change of living and being out at night; my fare, as to food, *is very plain* but wholesome, and I generally lie on boards with one or two blankets intervening." He could not but feel the hardship of the situation and suffer from it, yet even as he speaks of these things, he gives expression to his admiration of the noble character of his humble hosts.

In his endeavours to enlighten and uplift the heathen he proclaimed "the grace of God that bringeth salvation to all men," but he preached also a gospel of cleanliness, and decency, and industry, and intelligence. He brought help to them, and, better still, he taught them to help themselves. He stirred them up to build the House of the Lord. And whilst that House was primarily a place for preaching the Word and administering the sacraments in the congregation, it was also a Sunday school and a day school, whence light as well as sweetness might come into the lives of the children of the forest. Nor did the missionary despise the work of an instructor in mechanics and agriculture. In "The Story of My Life," Ryerson says: "After collecting the means necessary to build the house of worship and school-house, I showed the Indians

how to enclose and make gates for their gardens, having some knowledge and skill in mechanics.

"Between daylight and sunrise, I called out four of the Indians in succession, and showed them how and worked with them, to clear and fence in, and plow and plant their first wheat and corn fields. In the afternoon I called out the school-boys to go with me, and cut and pile, and burn the brushwood in and around the village. The little fellows worked with great glee as long as I worked with them, but soon began to play when I left them."

His brother William, writing to the Rev. George Ryerson tells of his observations made on the mission: "I am very certain I never saw the same order and attention in any school before. Their progress in spelling, reading and writing is astonishing, but especially in writing, which certainly exceeds anything I ever saw. They were getting forward with their work. When I was there they were fencing the lots in the village in a very neat substantial manner. On my arrival at the mission, I found Egerton about half a mile from the village, stripped to the shirt and pantaloons, clearing land with between twelve and twenty little Indian boys who were all engaged in chopping and picking up the brush. It was an interesting sight. Indeed he told me that he spent an hour or more every morning and evening in this way, for the benefit of his own health and the improvement of the Indian children. He is almost worshipped by his people,

and, I believe, under God, will be a great blessing to them."

Here we come again in sight of that first and last great qualification of the noblest helpers of mankind. Something of their work may be done from the sense of duty, and there may be times when nothing but the sense of duty, that "stern daughter of the voice of God," can hold them to their work; but their noblest inspiration is drawn from the heart of God rather than from His will, and their greatest success is achieved through the labour of love. This generous affection transpires in many passages in the diary of Egerton Ryerson. On coming to his charge among the Indians he writes, "I feel an inexpressible joy in taking up my abode with them," and again "my heart feels one with them." And when he had had experience of the privations of Indian life and suffered frequent and depressing illness from the hardship endured, he exclaims on returning to his work after a short absence, "I am now among the dear objects of my care. My heart leaped for joy as I came in sight of the village and received such a hearty welcome."

At the conference of 1827, Mr. Ryerson was appointed to the Cobourg circuit which at that time extended from Bowmanville to Brighton. The Indian work at the Rice Lake and Mud Lake missions was still an object of his care, but his work was on the whole of a more pastoral and evangelistic character than that of his Credit and York

appointment. He speaks of the kindness received from his people and of the greater comfort of his circumstances and the corresponding advancement in his studies. But the work of controversy continued with increasing pressure and anxiety. It was about two years before this time that he was forced, much against his own inclination, into controversial writing. He speaks of it as of an affliction, but adds, "I feel it to be the cause of God, and I am resolved to follow truth and the holy scripture in whatever channel they will lead me." A few months later he writes: "My engagement in controversial writing savours too much of dry historical criticism to be spiritual, and often causes leanness of soul; but it seems to be necessary in the present state of matters in this colony, and it is the opinion of my most judicious friends that I should continue it till it comes to a successful termination." Again he writes, "During the past year (1826-7) my principal attention has been called to controversial labours. If the Lord will, may this cup pass by in my future life."

It was not the Lord's will, however, to answer this prayer. On the contrary, controversy was more and more required of the man who would have chosen for himself the work of a missionary and of an itinerant preacher. Mr. Ryerson tells us how he had to compose on horseback sermons and replies to his ecclesiastical adversaries as he passed from end to end of his extensive and laborious circuit.

Indeed, in Cobourg, stories are still told to the third generation of the way in which those replies were written. The young preacher would come in at nightfall from his long ride and sit up till morning looked in upon him and saw the pile of firewood consumed on the one side of him and a pile of manuscript grown up on the other. In this work thus thrust upon him, he so fulfilled the Apostolic precept, "Quit you like men, be strong," that when the conference in 1829 established the *Christian Guardian* newspaper, Mr. Ryerson was placed in the editorial chair and charged with the duty of vindicating the character and contending for the civil and religious rights of his people.

CHAPTER II

RELIGION AND POLITICS IN UPPER CANADA IN 1826

MR. RYERSON had not completed his first year of ministration to the religious wants of the settlers in Upper Canada when a new work was thrust upon him. This was no other than the consideration of the relation of the Christian church which he was serving and of sister churches to the political movements of the time. Such consideration was a necessary part of the work of a Methodist minister of that day. It was, indeed, forced upon him, if, as a citizen and a freeman, he would secure for himself and his posterity the rights and liberties which are now acknowledged without dispute to be the glory of our province, viz., perfect liberty of conscience and the absolute equality of all the churches in relation to the state. To understand this question it will be necessary to study somewhat carefully the constitution of Upper Canada as a British colony at this date, and also the peculiar working of this constitution under successive administrations for the preceding thirty-five years.

The Constitutional Act of 1791 separated Upper Canada from the old province of Quebec, and

created it what was known as a free crown colony. The government was vested in:

1. A governor appointed by the British crown, with constitutional powers to be exercised either at his discretion, or on the advice of an executive council appointed by and responsible to himself alone, or under instructions which accompanied his appointment, or were received from the colonial office in England from time to time. To this office he was directly responsible.

2. A legislative council composed of life-members holding their appointment from the crown, and with legislative powers similar to those exercised by the House of Lords in England.

3. A legislative assembly elected by the people and with legislative powers defined by the act.

The prerogatives of the governor as defined in the act were: *(a)* the summoning or appointment of members of the legislative council; *(b)* the division of the province into electoral districts for the election of members of the assembly, and the making of all other provisions for the first election; *(c)* the giving or withholding of the royal assent to the legislative acts of the council and assembly; and *(d)* the calling and proroguing of the legislature and the dissolution of the assembly, and the calling for a new election, provision being made that not more than twelve months shall elapse without a session of the legislature. The appointment of the executive council is also alluded to in the act, but

rather as a prerogative already existing than as constituted by this act. But this appointment of the executive council was not the only power vested in the governor apart from the provisions of the Constitutional Act. As the council held control of the great departments of executive government, and was responsible to the governor only, the governor, by virtue of this authority, became *de facto* the prime minister of the colony. He stood not simply as the representative of the sovereign, maintaining the constitution and seeing that it was obeyed by all subordinate branches of the government, but he became the political leader of the government, making appointments and controlling policy in the great executive departments, though without control of the legislation necessary for the execution of that policy except in the upper chamber. On the other hand it lay in his power to prevent any legislation intended to obstruct the successful event of his executive policy. Of this government Sir Erskine May, in his "Constitutional History of England," chapter seventeen, says: "Self-government was then the theory; but in practice, the governors, aided by dominant interests in the several colonies, contrived to govern according to the policy dictated from Downing Street. Just as at home, the crown, the nobles, and an ascendant party were supreme in the national councils, so in the colonies the governors and their official aristocracy were generally able to command

the adhesion of the local legislatures." This, however, was far from being the case in Upper Canada, for reasons which our author proceeds to point out: "A more direct interference, however, was often exercised. Ministers had no hesitation in disallowing any colonial acts of which they disapproved.[1] They dealt freely with the public lands as the property of the crown, often making grants obnoxious to the colonists, and peremptorily insisting on the conditions under which they should be sold and settled. Their interference was also frequent regarding church establishments and endowments, official salaries and the colonial civil lists. Misunderstandings and disputes were constant, but the policy and will of the home government usually prevailed. Another incident of colonial administration was that of patronage. The colonies offered a wide field of employment for the friends, connections, and political partisans of the home government." In Upper Canada this exercise of patronage by the colonial office never reached the extremity of abuse described by May as prevailing in the American colonies during the preceding century. But there was scarcely less objection to the irresponsible exercise of patronage by the governor and his council on behalf of their adherents in the colony itself.

[1] The Constitutional Act provided that all acts of the colonial legislature might be disallowed within two years after being officially laid before the secretary of state. The colonial office thus held a two-fold veto on colonial legislation, first indirectly through the governor, and later directly in the royal name.

A constitution with such inherent liability to abuse could scarcely be expected to work to the satisfaction of an intelligent people who had continually before them the example of the operation of a more thoroughly responsible system of government immediately to the south, and who were many of them but lately immigrants from the parent land, where already the principles of responsible government were being far more effectively carried into practice. There was, of course, a bare possibility that such a constitution might afford a tolerably satisfactory government. If the colonial office on the one hand and the governor on the other used their large powers with wise consideration and discretion, anticipating the needs and wishes of the people as expressed through their legislative assembly, it might have been possible to avoid what otherwise must lead to inevitable conflict. But the spirit which framed this colonial constitution was evidently still jealously tenacious of imperial prerogatives, and determined to govern the colonies for the good of the colonists, as they viewed it, but at the same time in subordination to what they considered the paramount interests of the mother land. The constitution framed in this spirit gave to the colonists the name, the idea of, and the desire for self-government, while it withheld the reality, and thus of itself planted the seeds of dissatisfaction in the minds of a progressive people.

But this was not its only weakness. Its very

efforts after good became in themselves the greatest of evils. The colonial office itself was by no means either regardless or forgetful of what it considered the best interests of the colonists; and a large part of the Constitutional Act is devoted to making provision for what it considered the highest interests of these loyal children of the empire. To say nothing of mistakes in the province of Lower Canada, in Upper Canada two most serious errors were the provisions for the endowment of an established church and for the creation of a titled hereditary aristocracy with places in the upper legislative chamber. These provisions, both embodied in the new colonial constitution, both destined to utter practical failure, but both acting as irritants provoking unfortunate conflicts, were the beginning of misfortunes from which we have not perfectly escaped even to-day, though we have passed a century of effort to counteract their far-reaching influence. These provisions, with others which followed, were the result of the spirit of an age when the supreme care of the state was for what was regarded as the superior class of people, and when the great body of the population, whose labour and virtue constitute its wealth and strength, were passed over with but little consideration. To such an age a governing class, of which the clergy of the established church were regarded as a part, seemed a prime necessity; and to create and educate such a class and provide

for their maintenance seemed an imperative duty. The rest of the people were expected "to labour truly to get their own living, and to do their duty in that state of life unto which it pleased God to call them." It can now scarcely be doubted that some such conception was in the minds of the framers of the Constitutional Act; and it is even more certain that such was the policy inaugurated by the first governor of Upper Canada, Lieut.-General John Graves Simcoe. His educational policy alone is proof of this. It was more concerned with the erection of schools after the model of the English classical schools, and with the founding of a university, than with the elementary education of all the people; and while for the one class it provided an endowment, which, if not sufficient, has at least supplied our wants for an entire century in high schools and university, it left the other to care for itself.

But the population which laid the foundations of Upper Canada was not of the material to be treated after this fashion. The men whose intelligence and whose moral and political principles were so matured as to lead them to sacrifice almost their entire worldly fortune for the sake of those principles, were not easily to be divided into upper and lower classes, or relegated to any inferior position while their neighbours were constituted a governing class. Moreover, they were men of various forms of religious faith. There were Puritan Independents

from New England, Quakers from Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, Lutherans and Dutch Reformed from New York and Pennsylvania, Presbyterians from New Jersey, and from various parts a large body of the followers of John Wesley, and not a few Baptists. Probably from the beginning the adherents of the Church of England were a decided minority of the population, while Presbyterians, Methodists, Roman Catholics and Baptists together constituted the majority. The founding of an endowed and established church under such circumstances was as serious a mistake and as difficult an enterprise as the creation of a titled governing class. The body whom it was proposed to make the established church was from the beginning behind in the race, while energy, zeal, self-denying labour and sympathy with the progressive spirit of the age were largely if not exclusively on the side of the so-called sects.

The policy then inaugurated might thus have expired with its founder's term as governor, and was liable at any time to have been abandoned by the coming to the colony of an intelligent and liberal-minded governor, had not two or three notable circumstances combined to give it a living continuity and fictitious support. The first of these was the coming to the country in 1799, to inaugurate the educational side of the policy, of John Strachan, afterwards first Anglican bishop of Toronto. The post was first offered to the famous

Thomas Chalmers, then also a young man fresh from college, and by him declined. What might have been the result of his acceptance no one can now venture to conjecture. The event proved that the man to whom it fell was preëminently fitted for the work, and would have succeeded in its accomplishment had it been possible to mortal man. This young man, then a mere youthful school teacher, was employed solely for that purpose, and because of his success in that profession. But he was endowed with all the qualities of a great political leader, a pleasing personality, intense energy, tireless pertinacity of purpose, a mind fruitful of resources for the practical accomplishment of his purposes, and a judgment of men and of circumstances which enabled him to take their measure with accuracy and to make both serve his purposes. He was not long in the country before he had fully grasped the dominant policy and had shaped himself and his life work for its accomplishment. Though a divinity student of the Church of Scotland his association with the rector of the Church of England in Kingston, and with Mr. Cartwright a leading layman of that body, led to his taking orders in that church; and from that day, May, 1803, his future course was determined. His great talents were soon recognized and in a few years his appointment as rector of York, and a little later as member of the executive council, made him virtual leader of the Church of England party

in the province, and gave at once continuity, guidance and energy to its policy. Henceforth his ambition was to make the Church of England dominant as the established church in the country with full control of the vast clergy reserve endowments and of the superior education as well as the government of the province.

A circumstance which afforded some fictitious strength to this ambitious politico-religious policy was the relation of several of the other religious bodies and particularly of the Methodists to the sister or rather parent churches in the United States. These churches had sprung from the American colonies at the era of the Revolution, through the United Empire Loyalist emigration which founded Upper Canada. Methodist preachers, themselves also, almost to a man, of Loyalist sympathies, had followed their people to their new homes in the northern wilderness and had shared all their early privations and trials. But under the Methodist itinerant economy they did not establish a separate church, judging that the work of preaching the gospel was not limited by political boundaries. As the Methodists were the most effectual obstacle in the way of the success of the church policy, their opponents were not slow to attach to them the opprobrium of being republicans, annexationists, and not loyal to the British throne and institutions. The reproach was most unjust, for Canadian Methodism was born out of the great United Empire Loyalist

movement, and this was quite as true of her first preachers as of her people, except that they had little or no property to lose and were precluded by their clerical profession from taking up arms.

A second circumstance tending in the same direction was the prestige afforded to the English church by its relations to the established church in England. If the relation of Methodism to the parent church in the United States was a disadvantage to Canadian Methodism, the relation of the Anglican church in Canada to the parent Church of England operated to the advantage of the colonial church. It thus secured not only prestige, but also, by the transfer of British law and usage to the new colony, a legal status denied to other bodies of Christians. Under that advantage it even laid claim to be the established church of all the colonies as well as of the parent country. This claim was not made good, as the example of the older American colonies was against it, and as the established Church of Scotland at once put forth a similar claim on the same ground. But both bodies secured in this way rights of property and of the legal performance of ministerial or clerical functions. On the other hand the other denominations could hold no property, and baptisms or marriages performed by their ministers were not recognized in law; and only after a struggle of thirty years were these disabilities removed. The facts thus recited are the key to a large part of the first fifty

years of the history of Upper Canada, and to a good deal which has happened since that time. At first indeed the people were so occupied with their individual struggle in the wilderness for a bare subsistence, that they scarcely noticed the lack of these political rights and privileges. They built their humble places of worship on a site cheerfully offered by one of themselves and accepted and used in simple christian confidence. The question of the legal bearings of baptism was scarcely raised, and as for marriage, while its importance could not be overlooked, they accepted the legal provisions existing, though often at great inconvenience and sacrifice.

During this first period also, the ecclesiastical policy, while it had laid some foundations, had not developed any considerable strength. Neither the clergy reserves nor the educational endowment had as yet become productive of appreciable revenue, and the superior advantages of the Anglican church were as yet imported from the old country rather than acquired here. If the English church was supported by government grants, they were made in England and not in Canada.

But even in these times when the Methodists and others were quietly making the best of their disadvantages, the existence of a spirit of arrogant enmity towards them was manifest not only in social life, but also in the exercise of civil authority in forms which exhibited the persecuting spirit

of barbarous ages. The death of Charles Justin McCarthy through the action of the civil authorities at Kingston, was the extreme instance of this. He was the martyr of early Canadian Methodism.

But this preliminary period was brought to an end by a convulsion thrust into our history from without. This was the war of 1812-14. With the causes or the events of this war we have nothing to do, except to say that in it the Canadian Methodists abundantly vindicated their loyalty to the British throne and institutions. In the noble rally to drive the invader from our soil they bore a manly part; and while all Canadian hearts were united by the common danger and in the common struggle, no one was found base enough even to whisper a slander against either their loyalty or their courage.

With the close of the war came a new era of political and industrial life to Upper Canada. The wave of imperialism which through the South African war has stirred our own time, is largely sentimental. But it has made us feel that we are not only Canadians but a part of Greater Britain. The wave which followed the war of 1812 was intensely sentimental. It made us feel that we were Canada, a country, able to defend its rights and soil; not a mere outlying territory which our neighbours might covet and take possession of. But that wave was one of great material uplift as well. The expenditure of British money during the war intro-

duced an era of prosperity. The desperate struggle with want and sometimes with starvation was over, and the whole population began to feel that our country was a home worth fighting for, dying for, and living for, that it might become still more worthy of our affection. A new public interest was created in all that belonged to the country, and the country began to feel the pulsations of political life. It was such an awakening as in all ages has led nations into larger life and liberty. Nor was Canada alone in feeling the power of this movement. It stirred all western Europe, and it led in England itself to the perfecting of her system of responsible government. In fact, our Canadian movement might in comparison seem to be but an insignificant side current of the great movement of the time. But little as it might appear in the great world's history, it had a distinctive unity and character of its own; and to us it is all-important—it is the foundation history of our own country. It was not entirely an isolated history. It had very definite relations to the greater movement in the older lands, especially in England, as we shall see presently. But the forces by which it was propelled were not extraneous; they arose from within, and out of the facts and conditions which we have already described. It therefore assumed a character distinctively Canadian. It was neither American republicanism nor English chartism, but Canadian reform. It was the movement of the great body of the people of

Upper Canada toward perfect civil and religious equality and political manhood and freedom.

This movement was along three distinct yet closely related and parallel lines. One was political, and its goal was responsible government. A second was religious, and its goal was equal civil rights of free churches in a free state. The third was educational, and its goal was common provision for all the people, without distinction of class or creed. It would be a mistake to suppose that the actors in this movement always clearly grasped the results for which they were struggling, or against which they were striving in vain. Each felt the force and direction of the current in his own immediate vicinity, and was making as best he could for some objective point within his own range of vision; but the far-off goal of the unexplored river in the still distant sea, none as yet fully knew. In dealing, therefore, with any one of these men of that time as makers of Canada, we must judge of them not only by final results, but also by the human motives and limitations of their time. They sometimes laboured more wisely and sometimes more vainly than they knew. Their apparent defeats were sometimes real successes, and at others their seeming success was a real disaster. To impute to them moral inconsistency because to us now, or even to their neighbours then in another part of the current, they seemed to be moving in a wrong direction, would be a great injustice. Such movements

growing out of and impelled by the needs of a whole nation are too great to be controlled or even fully grasped by the mind of any one man. But yet they call for and make great men, and find the materials out of which they may be made.

It was to the second and third of these movements that Mr. Ryerson gave his life, and he was led into the third from the second. Both movements, of necessity, touched politics, and were often closely related to, if not identified with, the political movement. But from the beginning he was a Methodist preacher and not a politician. Had he been a politician his connection with these movements would have thrown him into the ranks of political reform, if not revolution. But for such an alliance he had no sympathy. His political predilections were thoroughly conservative. Through his studies of Blackstone and Paley, at an age when very few have formed clearly defined political opinions, he had settled his conceptions of the rights of the crown, the parliament, and the people; and from the constitutional principles thus defined he would have considered it a sin in morals as well as a crime in law to depart. It is scarcely necessary to say that these conceptions were not republican; and it could scarcely be said that they included all that is understood by constitutional liberty and responsible government in our time. What he was seeking was not a change of constitution, but the righting of wrongs. He wished that what he believed to be justice should

be done under the existing constitution. The constitutional reformers on the other hand were firmly of opinion that justice to the masses of the people would never be done until the constitution itself was so reformed as to give the voice of the people power to determine the policy of the government. Forming their judgment from the standpoint of men of the world, and not from that of a devout and enthusiastic young clergyman, they were quite convinced that so long as the constitution placed the power of shaping public policy and controlling legislation in the hands of a ruling class, they would be shaped and controlled for the advantage of that class. And in this opinion they were quite right, and the whole course of subsequent history has justified their struggle for constitutional reform. But Mr. Ryerson's ideal objects were not of this radical character. He sought equal rights for all the churches, and equal and efficient provision of education for all the people. He perhaps at first did not even see the necessity of complete separation of church from state, although he fully recognized the injustice of the establishment of one church as a state, and so a dominant, church. The state might assist religion,[1] but there must be no favouritism. In the same way he did not begin with a theory of secular education separated from all religious bodies. His earnest religious nature was in full sympathy

[1] Even W. L. Mackenzie in 1824 held this view. See the first number of the *Colonial Advocate*.

with the idea that true education must be moral and religious as well as intellectual. He would not have divorced education from the influence of the churches. But he could not brook the injustice of having the educational endowments of the country controlled for their own advantage by one religious body.

Simple, practical, and conservative as these ideas appear to us to-day, they brought him into direct conflict with the policy of Dr. Strachan. In 1813, Dr. Strachan had been appointed a member of the executive council of Upper Canada; in 1820 he was made a member of the legislative council, and in 1827 was made Archdeacon of York. These appointments gave him a position of commanding influence in both church and state for the successful development of his politico-ecclesiastical policy. In fact, by 1820 it is clear that the policy and patronage of Upper Canada were controlled not so much by the lieutenant-governor for the time being as by the rector of York and the chief justice of the province. It is not necessary for our purpose to enlarge upon all the aspects of their exercise of this irresponsible power; we are concerned with the facts only along the ecclesiastical and educational lines.

The Constitutional Act of 1791 had authorized the setting apart for the support of a Protestant clergy of a quantity of land equal in value to one seventh of all the lands granted by the crown for

settlement. This was in lieu of the tithes granted to the Roman Catholic church in Lower Canada. The lands so reserved in Upper Canada finally amounted to nearly 2,400,000 acres. Although the intention of some of the framers of the act was probably to make these lands the foundation of an established church—and this was certainly the policy of Simcoe, both for political and religious reasons—yet the act did not specifically assign either the lands or their revenue to the Anglican church. In fact, by giving the governors power to assign a portion or the whole of them in each township for the support of a rectory, it excluded any legal claim to them on the ground of the original grant. Until after the war the lands were not productive of any appreciable revenue, and the support of the Anglican clergy was derived from grants made by the home government and by the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. Up to 1819 the annual product of the reserves did not exceed £700. But before this date the clergy reserve question was forced upon the attention of the people and the legislature in another form. These blocks of unoccupied land obstructed settlement by separating the settlers by intervening tracts of forest without roads, as well as by increasing by one-sixth the burden of taxation for any local purpose. A resolution was introduced in 1817 on this subject, and in 1819 the House asked for a return of the lands leased and of the revenue derived

therefrom. The governor referred the matter to England for instructions. At the same time a congregation of the Church of Scotland in the town of Niagara petitioned the governor for an allowance of £100 a year for the support of a minister. The governor transmitted the petition to England, and with it he raised the question as to whether the Church of Scotland was entitled to participate in the reserves. These circumstances stirred up the Anglicans to immediate action, and in the next year, through the application of their bishop, Dr. Mountain, they were created a corporation in each province and invested with the management of the clergy reserves. But under the advice of the law officers of the crown, who recognized the claims of the Church of Scotland, and as a matter of policy, this power of management was not made to include any right of ownership. This was to be reached, if reached at all, by the establishment and endowment of rectories by the governor under the existing act. On this, under the existing temper of the people, they did not venture, resting satisfied for the present with the prestige of being guardians of the property.

But the question, once raised, could not be postponed. The claim of the Church of Scotland, now supported by eminent legal authority at home, as well as by the advice of the Earl of Bathurst to give them a share in the reserves, was at once pressed. In 1823 they secured from the legislature

a presentation to the King in their favour which was rejected by the legislative council, and also pressed their claims upon the lieutenant-governor for aid from any source. In the meantime Dr. Strachan prepared a petition to the King asserting the full pretensions of the Anglican church, and supporting them by statements concerning the religious state of the province as unfounded as were those which a few years later in his sermon were destined to bring an entirely new force into the contest. These statements, the same in substance whether embodied in petition, chart, or sermon, were, however, not yet made public in the province. They were only for the sympathetic ears of councillors of state.

The question has been asked, why did not the Anglican party call into effect the power of the governor to establish rectories in every township, and endow them with the lands, and so secure legal possession? The reason would seem to be that they could not be satisfied with anything less than the exclusive possession of the whole; and this they could not expect to secure in the face of the political advice of the Earl of Bathurst that they should divide with the Church of Scotland. Without his assent they could not take action; and that assent they were not likely to secure in the face of the storm of opposition which such a course would have aroused in the province. The next year, Dr. Strachan, now the leader of the Anglican cause, was sent to England with the proposal "that the

clergy corporation should be empowered to sell one-half of the lands thus appropriated, to fund the money derived from their sale, and to apply the interest towards the support of the clergy." Such is the statement of the proposition as given by Dr. Bethune in his "Memoirs of Bishop Strachan." This proposal again failed through Dr. Strachan's desire to secure the largest possible advantage to the church. The Canada Company offered to become the purchasers, but he objected to their price as too low; the project was delayed for the appointment of commissioners to value the lands, and finally fell through. This termination was not reached until after Dr. Strachan's return, and until events made it perfectly clear that his plan for the establishment and endowment of some hundreds of Anglican clergy in the province could not be carried into effect. This was doubtless in large part due to the influence upon the home government of the action of the legislative assembly from 1824 to 1826, and of a petition from the province of Upper Canada praying that the proceeds of the clergy reserve lands be divided among the Protestant denominations, or applied to the purpose of general education. This petition was called out by Dr. Strachan's famous chart, and was, with other Canadian questions, referred to a select committee of the British House of Commons in 1827. It was during this juncture that Dr. Strachan preached his famous sermon on the death of the Bishop of

Quebec, which called Mr. Ryerson into the conflict in April, 1826.

We may now turn to the other question of the time, the effort to control for denominational purposes the education of the country. The circumstances that meet us here are very different from those which we have just been considering. The early settlers in Upper Canada were generally religious people. By the end of thirty years they had largely supplied themselves with the means of grace. At that date the population of Upper Canada is estimated at 120,000, and a trustworthy contemporary document gives the following statement of the Protestant ministry in the province:

Church of England	16
Presbyterian and Congregational	15
Baptist	18
Methodist	33
Mennonites	7
Friends	10
Total	99

Besides these the Methodists employed 112 lay preachers. These statistics are of themselves the clearest evidence of the conditions which precluded the monopoly of religious functions or even rights and privileges by any one denomination. On the other hand there was no such preëmption of the field of education. Here was a sphere of influence at first entirely unoccupied, and one in which by the aid of public endowments the policy inaugurated by Governor Simcoe, and followed up with such marked

ability by Dr. Strachan, could find free and ample scope. The fundamental mistake in their policy and one that doomed it from the beginning to ultimate failure was its neglect of the common people.

The education of a nation naturally falls into three grand divisions: first, the primary, which should reach all the people; then, the secondary, which at best will not touch more than ten per cent., generally not more than five; and last, the university, reached by less than one-half of one per cent. It was to these two last fields of education that the policy we are considering was directed. And its method from the beginning was the building of a system of class education reserved for the rightful rulers of the people, and with no broad basis of universal instruction as its foundation. The grammar schools and university which they projected were not the higher departments of a comprehensive system of education which knows no distinction of class or rank, but opens the door of learning wide for the humblest child to whom God has given the ability to reach its very summit. They were shaped rather as an exclusive system for a caste; if they admitted the gifted child of poverty, it was an accorded privilege. They were never expected to draw their patronage from the whole body of the people. For these they did not attempt any provision. Fortunately they did not attempt to interfere with their making provision for themselves.

FIRST SCHOOL LEGISLATION

The original plan of Governor Simcoe, as carried into effect by President Russell, set apart 550,000 acres of public lands for the establishment of a university and four royal grammar schools. These were a little later proposed to be located—the university at York, and the grammar schools at Cornwall, Kingston, Newark, and Sandwich. It is evident that from the outset the character of the schools thus proposed was not to the mind of the legislative assembly, for nothing further was done till 1804, and then a motion for the establishment of these schools was negatived by a vote of seven to five. The reason for this defeat seems to have been not so much opposition to public provision for education, though there may have been both indifference and opposition, as a feeling that the scheme was not sufficiently comprehensive. A motion following, to establish a school in each of the districts was lost by the casting vote of the speaker. An act to this effect was finally passed in 1807, placing the appointment of trustees for these district schools in the hands of the lieutenant-governor, and such trustees were appointed for eight districts, viz., Eastern, Johnstown, Midland, Newcastle, Home, Niagara, London, and Western.

The legislation thus carried through both branches of the legislature and acted upon by the lieutenant-governor, finally became effective in the establishment of district grammar schools in the eight districts, and, after repeated amendments, its opera-

tion was extended to the establishment of twenty-five schools, twenty of which reported an attendance of 627 pupils, or an average of $31\frac{1}{2}$ for each school. Allowing the same for the five which made no returns, the whole number of children being educated under this system in 1845 was less than 800. The feeling of the great mass of the people towards the system may perhaps be judged from two petitions presented to the legislature shortly after its inauguration. One of these, from the Newcastle district, set forth, "That your petitioners find the said appropriation (£100 for the district grammar school) to be entirely useless to the inhabitants of this district in general." They therefore pray that the said acts "may be repealed, and that such other provision may be made to encourage common schools throughout this district as to you in your wisdom may seem meet." The other, from the Midland district, where one of the oldest and one of the best of these schools was established at Kingston, speaks in these terms: "Its object, it is presumed, was to promote the education of our youth in general, but a little acquaintance with the facts must convince every unbiased mind that it has contributed little or nothing to the promotion of so laudable a design. By reason of the place of instruction being established at one end of the district, and the sum demanded for tuition, in addition to the annual compensation received from the public, most of the people are unable to avail

themselves of the advantages contemplated by the institution. A few wealthy inhabitants and those of the town of Kingston reap exclusively the benefit of it in this district. The institution, instead of aiding the middle and poorer classes of His Majesty's subjects, casts money into the lap of the rich, who are sufficiently able, without public assistance, to support a school in every respect equal to the one established by law."

This want of the people also voiced itself in another and more practical form. It led to the large establishment of private and subscription schools, some of them of the more elementary character afterwards known as common schools, and others more pretentious and known as academies—a term borrowed from the United States. It is not possible for us now to obtain exact statistics of the number of the common schools in existence throughout the province prior to the triumph of popular education in the act of 1816. But in the next year, 1817, Mr. Gourlay collected statistics of no less than 259 common schools already in operation, and these were by no means the whole number in the province. From this we may safely infer that the voluntary efforts of the people to provide for the education of their own children had, even before the act of 1816, far outstripped in extent of influence the class system inaugurated in 1807.

The extension of the public schools to each of the eight districts, while seemingly in the interests

of the mass of the people, did not prove so from several causes. They were secondary rather than primary schools; there was but one in each district —a district covering the area of three or more counties; the trustees were appointed by the governor and the executive council, *i.e.*, the irresponsible ruling class; and finally the teachers selected by them were men fitted to support their views, and frequently clergymen of the English church. The schools were, besides this, beyond the reach of the people, on account of the expense of residence at a distance from home, and of the high fees charged. Their unpopularity appears from the fact that in almost every session a repeal bill was introduced, though failing either in the assembly, which at this time was Conservative through the influence of the war, or in the legislative council. The influence of popular feeling finally resulted in the passage of the Common School Bill of 1816. The main provisions of this act were the following:—(1) It authorized the inhabitants of any locality to convene a meeting at which provision might be made for building or providing a school-house, securing the necessary number of scholars (twenty or more), providing for the salary of a teacher, and electing three trustees for the management of a school. (2) It conferred upon the trustees power to examine teachers as to qualification, to appoint such to the school, to dismiss them if unsatisfactory, to make rules for the governing of the school, including

books to be used, and to grant the teacher a certificate on presentation of which he would be entitled to his proportion of the legislative grant to the district. (3) It made provision for grants in aid to the several districts, amounting in all to £6,000 per annum. (4) It authorized the lieutenant-governor to appoint for each district a board of education with the following powers:—to receive quarterly reports from the trustees of each school; to exercise superintendence over the schools; to disallow at their discretion the regulations made by the trustees, or the books used in the schools; to make further rules and regulations for the schools, and to distribute or apportion the legislative grant. These district boards were required to report to the lieutenant-governor. Their power to "proportion" the legislative grant was unrestricted, and they could use a part of it—up to £100—in purchasing books for use in the schools.

It will be seen that the first part of these provisions relating to school meetings, trustees and their powers, was simply a continuation of the existing institutions which the people had already created for themselves. The loyalist immigrants, from the time of their first arrival in the country, had organized voluntary municipal institutions for themselves on popular principles, and before the passing of this act a considerable number of schools had been thus created and supported in the older settlements. The new provisions of the act were the

legislative grant and the district boards, and the chief purpose of the latter would seem to have been, besides the apportionment of the money, the exclusion of disloyal teachers and text books.

The educational development of the province from the passing of this act (1816) to 1825 may be summarized as follows: (1) The reduction of the grant to common schools in 1820 from £6,000 to £2,500; (2) the introduction into a central school in York of the Bell system (the Church of England national system); (3) the constitution and appointment in 1823 of a general board of education for the province, consisting of the following gentlemen: the Honourable and Reverend John Strachan, D.D., Chairman; the Honourable Joseph Wells, M.L.C.; the Honourable George H. Markland, M.L.C.; the Reverend Robert Addison; John Beverley Robinson, Esquire, Attorney-General; Thomas Ridout, Esquire, Surveyor-General; (4) the passage of the extension and amendment act of 1824, which continued the grant and other provisions of 1820, made a further grant of £150 to be expended by the general board in the purchase of books for Sunday schools, to be equally distributed among the districts of the province, made provision for the extension of the benefits of the common school acts to Indian schools, and required that all teachers participating in legislative aid should pass an examination before the district board of education.

In this act the provincial board of education was

recognized as in existence or about to be appointed by the lieutenant-governor for the superintendence of education, but it is not specifically constituted by the act, nor are its powers defined other than in the matter of the purchase of the books for Sunday schools. It seems, therefore, that the appointment of this board and the definition of its powers was a matter of executive and not legislative authority. Its initiation by communication with the colonial office points in the same direction.[1]

On the incoming of the new legislative assembly elected in 1824, we thus find an educational system in existence, directed or supervised by district and provincial boards appointed by the lieutenant-governor, and at the head of the system the Reverend John Strachan, D.D., as chairman of the provincial board. The next steps in the development of this system were the university charter of 1827, and the founding of Upper Canada College in 1829; but as these enter into the struggle for equal rights, which began in deadly earnest the next year, and in which Mr. Ryerson was henceforth to take part as a prominent actor, we need not consider them in this preliminary review of the initial situation.

[1] An incidental circumstance, showing the trend or intent of movements at this time, is the petition of Dr. Strachan in 1818 for legislative aid for theological students.

CHAPTER III

THE BEGINNING OF THE STRUGGLE FOR EQUAL RIGHTS

DR. STRACHAN, in one of his published papers, refers to the year 1820 as a memorable one in the history of Upper Canada. The reason for this was the erection of the clergy of the Church of England into a body corporate, and their control of the clergy reserves. This, with his own personal accession to power and the hold which he was gradually securing on the educational work of the country, evidently made him sanguine of success in the prosecution of his far-reaching policy of making the Church of England the established and endowed, and so the dominant church of the young province, controlling the religious life and education of the whole people. The era is indeed memorable in the history of Upper Canada, but for just the opposite reason. It is the period from which dates the awakening of the people to a full sense of their political and religious danger, and the beginning of that struggle which finally resulted in the overthrow of the Strachan policy and the complete civil and religious emancipation of the province. For this result two things were necessary: the people must be aroused,

and competent leaders must be found. The first of these needed elements was furnished by the ruling party, even the wise and far-seeing Strachan himself contributing an essential part of the stimulus which goaded the people into strenuous self-defence. From this period we may date the beginning of distinct party life and spirit in the politics of the province, and this life was created, not by academic theory, nor by the assembly of a convention, or the formation of a platform, or the election of political leaders. It was the spontaneous revolt of manly independence both in church and state against unjust and arrogant assumptions and cruel wrongs.

As we are not attempting the political history of the province we cannot enter into the detailed statement of these wrongs, or of the political evils which culminated at this period. It will be sufficient to mention a few events which combined to awaken the mind of the whole province to a true sense of the situation. It took not a little to do this. The Upper Canadians were a loyal people. The older—and on the whole, more influential—families were United Empire Loyalists. No stronger appeal could be made than to their loyalty. The war of 1812 had continued and strengthened this feeling. Since the war, here and there a bolder spirit had called in question wrong-doing in high places, or had claimed recognition for the just rights of the people. The school bill of 1816 was one concession to such rights. But the voice of this party was constantly

hushed by the cry of disloyalty set up against all who dared to call in question the policy or acts of the ruling power; and without leadership and cohesion the voice of the people was as "one crying in the wilderness." Besides all this the people were too busy with the hard necessities of life to give the needed time and energy to these things. The first event which contributed to the awakening of the people was the prosecution and imprisonment of Gourlay, and his banishment from the country after his harsh treatment in prison had reduced him to shattered senility. The story has been told with thrilling effect by Dent, and the feelings stirred by its recital to-day are but a reflection of those aroused in the country at the time.

The election contests of Barnabas Bidwell followed, and, extending over two years or more, served to perpetuate the feelings aroused and to give them a more decidedly political direction. The Appleton case following awakened interest in the educational aspects of the question. Finally the sermon preached by Dr. Strachan on the occasion of the death of Bishop Mountain aroused the religious feeling of the entire body of the people who were not attached to the Church of England. This sermon, the immediate occasion of calling Mr. Ryerson into the field, will require fuller attention presently.

In the meantime we must deal with the more immediate effects of the general political awakening caused by these events. These effects were

clearly manifest in the general election of 1824 and in the first session of the newly-elected legislative assembly. Probably for the first time in the history of the colony an election contest was carried on in which not so much the individual candidates as the principles which they represented were prominently before the minds of the people. Nothing but the influence of a new political life could have produced this. This consciousness of a distinct issue before the electors was not the result of any of the political agencies of our time. A party or provincial press scarcely existed—Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate* was only a few weeks old. No great conventions had been held. There were no clearly recognized leaders of public opinion, and there was no party organization. This movement seemed to be the spontaneous uprising of political manhood against assumptions and injustice which could no longer be endured. The result was the return to the assembly of a majority of members opposed to the ruling party and their policy, and the election of one of their number, John Wilson, as speaker, by a majority of two. This narrow majority by no means represented their influence in the House. Feebler men whose convictions were with them were not yet prepared to cut loose from the old party still in power.

But this return of a majority to the assembly did not introduce an era of political reform. It was only the beginning of an era of political conflict

culminating in the new constitution of 1840. The ruling party represented by the governor and the executive council owed no responsibility to the assembly, and through the legislative council and the governor they held a negative control over all legislation. The direct advantage gained by the triumph of reform at the polls was the power to prevent any legislation which would further sacrifice the interests of the people. The assembly alone could make no positive progress towards even legislative improvement. But outside of this they gained another important advantage; they could express the sentiment and wants of the people to the people themselves. The popular branch of parliament became at least an organ for the clear and definite expression of political ideas and ideals. In it the people found set forth in speech what they had felt, but scarcely understood, and perhaps, as isolated individuals, would not have dared to utter. It even went further. It soon became the organ for the expression of the same ideas at the foot of the throne and before the parliament of England. It was especially in this latter way that it was able to forward largely and effectively the cause of constitutional reform in the colony.

Another and scarcely less important result of this new political life was the creation of leadership. Four men of conspicuous ability at once came to the front in the assembly,—John Wilson, the new speaker of the House, John Rolph, member for

Middlesex, and Peter Perry and M. S. Bidwell, members for Lennox and Addington. Three others, the Baldwins and W. L. Mackenzie, were as yet co-workers outside of the House. Mackenzie worked especially through his paper *The Colonial Advocate*, and the creation of a press through which the people could be kept in touch with the new political life was another most important event of the period.

The new movement from the political side had thus in the course of a very few years risen to commanding influence among the people, had acquired for itself a standing ground and organ of influential work in parliament itself, had called to its front able and energetic leaders, and had created a press through which it could disseminate necessary information among the people.

But important and far-reaching in its results as was this political side of the movement it by no means exhausted its force. From the political point of view, many of the religious questions raised were quite excluded, and others occupied a subordinate place. But the religious interests of a people are too important and lie too near to their hearts to be relegated to any secondary place; and the party in power were at this juncture fated to awaken against themselves the full force of the religious as well as the political sentiments of the people. This was brought about by three or four acts of Dr. Strachan following close on the political events just sketched.

The first of these was the sermon preached at York on July 3rd, 1825, on the death of the late Lord Bishop of Quebec. In this sermon, preached before a sympathetic audience of his own people, he expounded somewhat freely, not only his own ecclesiastical views and policy, but also his sentiments towards the other religious bodies of the country. The main points were the following: (1) The maintenance of the Divine authority and exclusive validity of the Episcopal Church polity; (2) the necessity of a state church and the moral obligation of the government to provide for its establishment and support; (3) the claim of the Church of England to be the established church of this colony and to the exclusive enjoyment of the clergy reserves; (4) disparaging references to other religious bodies, in which he represents them as disloyal, as imbued with republican and levelling opinions, as ignorant, incapable, and idle, and pictures the country which was largely supplied with the means of grace through their services as in a state of utter moral and religious destitution.

The persecution of Gourlay and the expulsion of Bidwell from the House of Assembly were scarcely more effective in arousing the political feelings of the country than was this unfortunate utterance in arousing the indignation of the religious community. This indignation immediately found a voice and a capable leader in the person of Egerton Ryerson, a young Methodist preacher then in the

first year of his ministry. He had been received on trial at the conference of 1825 and was stationed with the Rev. James Richardson on the Yonge Street and York circuit. His entrance upon the present controversy is thus described in "The Story of My Life": "The Methodists in York at that time numbered about fifty persons, young and old. The two preachers arranged to meet once in four weeks on their return from their country tours, when a social meeting of the leading members of the society was held for consultation, conversation, and prayer. One of the members of this company obtained and brought to the meeting a copy of the Archdeacon's sermon, and read the parts of it which related to the attacks on the Methodists, and the proposed method of exterminating them. The reading of these extracts produced a thrilling sensation of indignation and alarm, and all agreed that something must be written and done to defend the character and rights of Methodists and others assailed, against such attacks and such a policy. The voice of the meeting pointed to me to undertake the work. I was then designated as 'The Boy Preacher,' from my youthful appearance and as the youngest minister in the church (he was then just twenty-three years of age). I objected on account of my youth and incompetence, but my objections were overruled, when I proposed as a compromise, that during our next country tour the Superintendent of the circuit (the Rev. James Richardson) and

myself should each write on the subject, and from what we should both write, something might be compiled to meet the case. This was agreed to, and at our next social monthly meeting in the town, inquiry was made as to what had been written in defence of the Methodists and others against the attacks and policy of the Archdeacon of York. It was found that the Superintendent of the circuit had written nothing; and on being questioned, I said I had endeavoured to obey the instructions of my senior brethren. It was then insisted that I must read what I had written. I at length yielded and read my answer to the attacks made on us. The reading of my paper was attended with alternate laughter and tears on the part of the social party, all of whom insisted that it should be printed. I objected that I had never written anything for the press, and was not competent to do so, and advanced to throw my manuscript into the fire, when one of the elder members caught me by the arms and another wrenched the manuscript out of my hands, saying he would take it to the printer. Finding my efforts vain to recover it, I said if it were restored I would not destroy but re-write it and return it to the brethren to do what they pleased with it. I did so. Two of the senior brethren took the manuscript to the printer, and its publication produced a sensation scarcely less violent and general than a Fenian invasion. It is said that before every house in Toronto (then the town

of York) might be seen groups reading and discussing the paper on the evening of its publication in June; and the excitement spread throughout the country. It was the first defiant defence of the Methodists, and of the equal and civil rights of all religious persuasions, the first protest and argument on legal and British constitutional grounds, against the erection of a dominant church establishment supported by the state in Upper Canada. It was the Loyalists of America and their descendants who first lifted up the voice of remonstrance against ecclesiastical despotism in the province, and unfurled the flag of equal religious rights and liberty for all religious persuasions. The sermon of the Archdeacon of York was the third formal attack made by the Church of England clergy upon the character of their unoffending Methodist brethren and those of other religious persuasions, but no defense of the assailed parties had as yet been written. At that time the Methodists had no law to secure a foot of land on which to build parsonages or chapels and in which to bury their dead; their ministers were not allowed to solemnize matrimony, and some of them had been the objects of cruel and illegal persecution on the part of magistrates and others in authority. And now they were the butt of unprovoked and unfounded aspersions from two heads of Episcopal clergy, while pursuing the 'noiseless tenor of their way' through trackless forests and bridgeless rivers and streams,

to preach among the scattered inhabitants the unsearchable riches of Christ."

These words from Dr. Ryerson's own pen indicate most clearly the circumstances under which and the motives by which he was led into this controversy. It was no itching for political notoriety, but rather manly indignation against wrong which forced the young Methodist preacher into the strife. But the extract gives us no conception of the ability and thoroughness with which he performed his task. Replies from the Church of England side quickly appeared, and again and again he returned to the conflict. In a short time a volume of the letters of two hundred and fifty pages was written which forms to-day a most valuable historical document. In these letters he shows himself a master of the scriptural and even of the patristic argument on the fundamental question of church polity, taking a position which is now conceded by the very best Anglican divines. He discusses the question of a church establishment with wonderful practical insight as well as wide historical learning. With keen satire he contrasts the self-denying life and labours, and the consecrated purity and zeal of the Methodist preachers with the lives, work and emoluments of their detractors. While not claiming for them scholastic learning, he shows that they were at least men of good sound fundamental education, practically fitted and able for their work; and finally he vindi-

cates their loyalty as citizens in words of burning eloquence.

Before the review of his sermon appeared in print Dr. Strachan had left the province on a visit to England where he spent some eighteen months improving the opportunity for the furtherance of his ecclesiastical and educational policy. The character of his efforts to this end appeared in three public documents which bear date in 1827. The first of these was a bill introduced into the Imperial parliament in February, 1827. Of it, Dr. Strachan himself writes: "I should now be on my way to Canada, but I got a bill introduced, in February, into parliament, to enable the crown to sell a portion of the clergy reserves, as they are at present totally unproductive, and a cause of clamour as being a barrier to improvement. I was anxious to avoid the great question that has been agitated in the colony about the meaning of the words 'Protestant Clergy,' and confined myself simply to the power of sale. But Mr. Stanley came forward with a motion to investigate the whole matter, and of consequence, the second reading of my bill is put off to the first of May. In the meantime the old ministry has fallen to pieces, and whether the new ministry will attend to my business or not remains to be seen." The second was the charter of King's College, dated March 15th, 1827. Of this he speaks in the same letter: "I am happy to tell you that I had the good fortune to accomplish the most

material part of my mission before the crash amongst the ministry took place. *My* university charter was issued on March 22nd, and I have had a few copies printed."

This charter, which was to be the subject of acrimonious dispute for more than twenty years to come, and the end of which we have not yet reached, deserves attention as one of the most important parts of Dr. Strachan's educational policy. We have already seen his relation, first to the district or secondary schools, and later to the common or primary. Over each he had secured some measure of control, but as yet by no means complete in the case of the latter. *His* charter was now about to leave no room for question as to the ecclesiastical control of the university, as will appear from the following provisions of the charter:

1. The bishop of the diocese was made the visitor of the university. This placed the supreme power of investigating and vetoing all questions as to its management and work in ecclesiastical hands.

2. The president must be a clergyman in holy orders of the united Church of England and Ireland, and the Rev. John Strachan, D.D., was appointed the first president.

3. The college was to be governed by a council consisting of the chancellor, the president, and seven professors who should be members of the united Church of England and Ireland and subscribe to the thirty-nine articles. In the lack of

seven such professors the council was to be filled by graduates who should be members of the Church of England and subscribe as above.

4. Degrees in divinity were conditioned on the same declarations, subscriptions and oaths as were required at that date in the University of Oxford. They were thus confined to the clergy of the established church.

The third document was a letter to Mr. Horton, Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, setting forth the needs and claims of the church in Upper Canada to an establishment of two or three hundred clergymen deriving the greater portion of their income from *funds deposited in England.* This letter was seemingly connected with the bill already referred to, and contained statements very similar to those made in the sermon of 1825, and was accompanied by an ecclesiastical chart or table setting forth Dr. Strachan's estimate of the different religious bodies in Upper Canada. In this chart the names of thirty-one Anglican clergymen were given and the whole number was put at thirty-nine. The Presbyterians were placed as eight, the Methodists were said to be very uncertain, "perhaps twenty or thirty," and all others "very few" and "very ignorant."

These documents once more awakened the political and religious sentiment of the province. Petitions extensively signed by the inhabitants of the province were forwarded to England, and

representations by resolution of the House of Assembly were laid before the British House of Commons, and the whole subject of the civil government of both Upper and Lower Canada, which also had its important grievances, was referred to a select committee of the House, which, after taking voluminous evidence on all the questions raised, reported to the House in July 1828. Before this committee Mr. George Ryerson appeared on behalf of the Upper Canadian petitioners touching the university charter and the clergy reserves and the ecclesiastical chart. The petitioners presented a counter chart, compiled by the Rev. Dr. Lee of the Presbyterian Church. These facts are evidence of the earnestness of the people in the assertion of their civil and religious liberties at this juncture.

In the meantime, Dr. Strachan, having returned to Canada on March 7th, 1828, delivered a speech before the legislative council "to repel the charges against his conduct in relation to a certain letter and ecclesiastical chart, said to have been addressed by him to the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, and in his agency in procuring the charter for the University of King's College for many months past circulated in the public journals." This speech, which once more called forth the pen of Mr. Ryerson, is largely occupied with the defence of personal rectitude and consistency. Apart from this, its most important elements were

the history of the bill in the English parliament in the summer of 1827, and of Dr. Strachan's relations to it; his appeal to the self-interest of the Church of Scotland; his defence of the Church of England's claim to be the established church of Canada and to exclusive right as such to the clergy reserves; and his defence of his university charter as "the most liberal that has ever been granted." As a minor point it may be noted that it contains an indirect appeal to the "Wesleyan Methodists," by which at this time he means the British missionaries as distinguished from "those Methodists who get their teachers and preachers from the United States." These last he holds to be "the enemies of the established church," because they are "at this moment labouring to separate religion from the State, with which it ought ever to be firmly united, since one of its great objects is to give stability to good government; nor can it be separated with impunity in any Christian country."

It was scarcely to be expected that the Methodists would sit down quietly under such a challenge. The address was published by request of the legislative council in March or April, and by the beginning of May Mr. Ryerson had commenced his reply, which was completed by June 14th, in a series of eight letters addressed to Dr. Strachan. In these letters he cheerfully admits Dr. Strachan's sincerity, but makes a very strong case against his consistency, and exposes the artful character of

his appeals to self-interest. Once more he vindicates the rights and the loyalty of the Christian body to which he belongs, and points out the fictitious character of the Doctor's sneering references to their ecclesiastical movement toward independence of the American Church as due to his advice. But by far the weightiest part of his reply is his masterly attack upon Dr. Strachan's fundamental principles and policy. He discusses the great questions raised as follows:

1. Is an established church a benefit to the state?

2. Is such the necessary or best means for promoting the interests of religion?

3. Is the Church of England already the established church of Canada?

4. Ought it to be so established with peculiar privileges and endowments?

To each of these questions the reply is a most emphatic negative, enforced by such considerations as these:—The great work of the church is not political, but purely moral and spiritual. When it enters the political sphere its presence there is productive of evil and a menace to the liberty of the citizen and the unity of the state. History proves that the establishment and endowment of a church has a tendency to destroy its spiritual vitality and power, the Church of England herself, according to the testimony of her own divines, being an example. The answer to the question, Is the Church

of England by law established in Upper Canada, is a clear and comprehensive piece of legal argument founded on the Constitutional Act of 1791, which is interpreted by its own internal use of the terms employed, and by the fact that to secure certain special privileges to the Church of England, specific enactments are made, such specifications excluding a general comprehensive interpretation by a recognized principle of law. The claim that the Church of England is by law established in all the British colonies under acts of parliament from Elizabeth onward, by the language of the Coronation Oath and by acts of royal prerogative is clearly disposed of by the example of numerous British colonies since that time, in which such claim was neither recognized nor enforced, and by the fact that when it was so established it was done by express Royal Charter, and further by the recognition of the Roman Catholic Church in Lower Canada. Finally he concludes the fourth question in the negative by showing that every ground upon which such establishment might be based is lacking in the case of Upper Canada. It is not the church of the majority, nor does its moral and religious influence justify any such claim; and to so establish and force it upon the people would be to its own fatal disadvantage.

Turning from the church to the university charter, he points out its sectarian character, its lack of adaptation to the wants of our country, its injustice

to all religious bodies except the Anglican, the misrepresentations by which it had been secured, and he concludes by contrasting Dr. Strachan's educational system forced upon the people against their will and under the complete domination of the Anglican Church with the Scottish system founded by act of their own parliament, fitted to their national circumstances, commanding the general assent and confidence of the people, and subject to no undue interference or control from their clergy. By this second effort Mr. Ryerson became the recognized leader of the religious side of this great movement for religious liberty and equal civil rights. The other side, involving the fundamental question of a government completely responsible to the people, was, as we have seen, led by other men of acknowledged political ability; but while they were contending for closely related and no less important rights, there is nothing to show that he stepped aside from his important religious responsibilities to interfere in these political questions. It is not even evident that he sympathized with the political side of the reform movement, but rather probable that he held to the old conservative political faith of not intermeddling with those who are given to change.

Especially was the Methodist Church (numbering at this time about ten thousand members and fifty thousand adherents, with fifty-six ministers), fully awakened to the dangers which now threatened its

liberties and progress, and under a leadership seemingly raised up for the time by Divine Providence, it moved forward to meet the needs of the situation with an energy and self-sacrificing enterprise which must command our highest admiration.

CHAPTER IV

A METHODIST PRESS AND A METHODIST COLLEGE

DURING these years in which he was engaged in this first controversy, Mr. Ryerson was still a young preacher, not yet admitted to the full responsibilities of the Christian ministry. At the conference of 1829 he was ordained an elder, being then twenty-six years of age. From this time forward he takes a prominent place in the councils of the church. But even on this occasion the powerful impulse which his writings had given to the thoughts and energies of Methodism was seen in two important actions of the conference. At the conference of 1824 the Canadian Methodists had felt and expressed the desire for an independent organization which would free them from the reproach of being subject to the jurisdiction of a church belonging to a foreign country. At that date they were constituted a distinct conference but still connected with and under the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. In 1828 they had been erected into an independent Canadian Church with the full consent of their American brethren. This action was creditable to

the Christian spirit and patriotism of both parties. The American Church recognized the obligations which rested on the Canadians as citizens of another country; the Canadians recognized their obligations to the parent church, through whose missionary zeal their churches had been planted, and both recognized that the work of God should not be hindered or prejudiced by any political complications. The separation was with mutual good-will and affection, a voluntary sacrifice of personal feelings and historic sentiment to the higher interests of religion and citizenship. No refutation of the slander that Canadian Methodism was disloyal could be more complete than that which was afforded by this action. Nor was it without important results for the political future of Upper Canada. An independent Canadian Methodism has been no small factor in the creation of a united Canadian national spirit as a part of the British Empire.

The new Canadian Methodist Church was now free to develop a thoroughly Canadian policy in founding church enterprises adapted to its distinctive Canadian needs. The first of these was a Methodist press. At the conference of 1829 steps were taken for the establishment of a weekly paper, to be called *The Christian Guardian* and Mr. Ryerson was elected editor and stationed at York. Henceforth this journal was to be the exponent of the views of Methodism on the great questions which agitated both the religious and the political

sentiment of the country, and in the hands of Mr. Ryerson was shortly to be acknowledged by the lieutenant-governor himself as the leading paper of the province, whose influence was of the highest importance in the critical times which even then were so close at hand. The editorial chair was the official recognition by the Canadian Methodist Church of Mr. Ryerson's leadership in the great issues which were agitating the country and the churches. The financial side of *The Guardian* was characteristic of the self-denying spirit and enterprise of this heroic age. Stock to the amount of $2,000 in 100 shares of $20 each was subscribed, the greater part of it by the fifty-four ministers and preachers who composed the conference of that year. The first number was issued on November 21st, 1829. The spirit and attitude of the paper may be judged from the following extract, quoted from an editorial in the first volume in Dr. Webster's excellent history of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada: "The constitution of a Church and State establishment is not suited to the atmosphere of Canada. Such a monster, whether with one, two or three heads, must very soon share the fate in this country which he has lately met with in France; for the unobstructed air of free discussion is his mortal poison, and never can he long maintain a successful contest against the deathly piercings of that triple sword of *truth, justice and Puritan independence,* which is turning

every way, guarding the intellectual citadels of the good people of Canada against his blasphemous approach. 'Many are running to and fro, and knowledge is increasing,' and it is too late in the day to attempt to introduce into British North America the policy of Portugal and Spain, or that of Charles the Tenth."

The second important interest to which the attention of the Methodist conference was directed at this early period was that of education. The entire question, not only of religious instruction in the fundamental doctrines of religion, but also the broader question of higher education for ministers and people occupied the attention of the conference. At that date the other churches differed as widely from Methodism in theology as they did in their quality and methods of work. The conference of 1829 organized a Sunday School Union, the first in Upper Canada, and the foundation of a Sunday School organization which is to-day by far the largest and most influential in our country. In 1830 the first formal steps were taken for the establishment of a Seminary of Learning. Mr. Ryerson's name does not appear on the first committee as he was still a junior member of the conference, but before the project was carried into successful operation, he was to become a foremost worker in the labours by which its almost insuperable difficulties were overcome. But a Methodist college, truly Christian in its educational influence, yet

broadly liberal in its constitution and work, as became the doctrines and spirit of Methodism, was an essential part of the far-seeing and aggressive policy which he had marked out for Methodism. This policy had not been propounded in any conventional platform. It had scarcely been expressed in words, perhaps not formulated to his own mind in very definite propositions. It was a spirit which found expression in deeds as well as words. This spirit fired his own youthful impetuosity, and it was thoroughly contagious, and the whole Methodist Church felt its influence. Its voice was, we will submit to no ecclesiastical domination, we will acknowledge ourselves inferior to no other body of people, we will assert our rightful place and influence as citizens on an equality with every other citizen of this free new country. But it was a spirit of wisdom as well as of manly independence, and that wisdom clearly indicated that to hold their own in this struggle for their rights, the young Methodists must be as well educated and as thoroughly intelligent as their neighbours. In the pursuit of this noble policy Mr. Ryerson had already led the way by the example of his own young life. Since his conversion no opportunity of gaining knowledge had been allowed to pass unimproved. He had devoured both the English and the ancient classics with a greedy appetite. He had become thoroughly at home in the history of ancient and modern times, he had studied the jurisprudence of

Blackstone and the philosophy of Paley as well as the best English divines, and at twenty-six he was perhaps the "best informed" man of his years in the country. His example, his ambitions, as well as his words thus aroused the whole Methodist ministry and people to the importance of the most ample learning in ministers and laity if they were to assert their rights against supercilious arrogance. Victoria College was thus born out of the struggle for religious liberty and equal civil rights. But before entering upon the consideration of Mr. Ryerson's active part in this new enterprise, we must give our attention to another development of the great struggle in which he was now so thoroughly engaged.

We have seen that in his address before the legislative council, in March, 1828, Dr. Strachan made a bid not only for the aid of the Old Kirk Presbyterians, but also for that of the English Wesleyan missionaries, a few of whom were already in Upper Canada. The action of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal church in the United States providing for the independence of the Canadian Methodists was taken a very few weeks after the delivery of this address, and the fact that this was in contemplation was already well known and is referred to by Dr. Strachan. But another important circumstance was not so well known, though possibly known to Dr. Strachan even at this date. What that circumstance was

appears from the evidence of Dr. Alder before the select committee of the English House of Commons in July, 1828, a few months after Dr. Strachan's address, and three months before the independence of the Canadian Methodist church was formally completed, but two months after the action of the American conference which provided for it. In that evidence Dr. Alder reveals these important facts:

1. That the English Methodist authorities were already looking forward to the annexation of Upper Canadian Methodism as a part of their work.

2. That for this purpose they were looking to securing a share in the clergy reserves.

3. That this policy, if not based upon and originated by, was at least associated with communications which they had received from the Governor-General, and communications to the colonial office from Sir Peregrine Maitland, with which Dr. Alder had evidently become acquainted. The references in the evidence to these documents is as follows:—"This is the opinion of the Governor-General, from whose letter to me (which I received a few days before I left the province) I beg permission to read an extract. 'We all know,' His Lordship observes, 'that the Established Church cannot provide clergymen at all places where they are required and desired; in that difficulty the Wesleyan ministers have rendered most valuable services, and I think they are qualified and capable to render much

greater services under the protection and encouragement which they desire from His Majesty's government.' Do you conceive that the colonial government has manifested any desire for the extension of the British Wesleyan Methodists in that province? I believe there are documents in the colonial office addressed to Earl Bathurst and to Mr. Huskisson from Sir Peregrine Maitland which will show that His Excellency is very anxious that the number of British Methodist ministers should be increased as far as possible in Upper Canada; and I understand that he wrote home a short time ago recommending that pecuniary aid might be allowed us for that purpose." One further extract in answer to the claim of Methodists on the clergy reserves will serve to make clear the whole situation. "There is a difference of opinion among us on this subject; but the general opinion of our ministers in Lower Canada, I believe, is this, that if the reserves be appropriated to the sole use of the Church of England, we shall offer no objection to it; but if the Presbyterians are to have any part of these reserves, then we conceive that we have at least an equally good claim with them; and we should be very much dissatisfied if our claims were disallowed."

This new factor, which speedily developed into more definite form, introduced an entirely new problem into the struggles in which the Methodists and Mr. Ryerson were engaged. They were now

called to meet not only the ecclesiastical and political influences which opposed them from without, but also the possibility of weakness and division from within. There appear to be good grounds for the belief that this difficulty was itself brought about by the insidious plans of the dominant party. They expected, and with good reason, that the English Wesleyans, who up to this time in the mother land had always been politically subservient to the established church, would here also be willing to yield to their claims. In looking back now this should not be ascribed as a reproach to these English Wesleyans. As yet they, with the great body of the people of England, had not been awakened to a sense of political responsibilities and rights. It seemed to them quite right and natural that the institutions of the old land should without change be transplanted to Canada.

Notwithstanding the anticipations of Dr. Alder in 1828 that "the Methodists of Upper Canada will soon be brought to act under the direction of the British conference," they held on their way with increasing influence and prosperity for four years. In May, 1832, a communication was received from Dr. Alder that the Wesleyan Missionary Committee in London had again resolved to send missionaries to Upper Canada, and that Dr. Alder and twelve missionaries would sail shortly. "This announcement," says Mr. John Ryerson, then president of the Canada Conference Missionary Society,

"was to us like a thunderclap. For eight or nine years our church had been wading through deep waters of affliction, and enduring fightings without and fears within, while contending for the right to hold property on which to erect places of worship and in which to bury our dead, for right to solemnize matrimony, against the clergy reserve monopoly, and for equal rights and privileges before the law with the Church of England, in effecting by mutual consent our separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and our organization into an independent church, preceded and followed as it was by the tumults and schisms of Ryanism. And now when peace and quiet had apparently returned, and when expectations of increased prosperity were beginning to cheer us, to receive such an announcement was disheartening and crushing beyond what can be expressed. It was easy to predict what would be the result of rival Methodist congregations in every town and principal neighbourhood, and the rival congregations served by able ministers from England."

This resolution of the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee was not, however, altogether sudden. As we have seen, it was foreshadowed as a plan of absorption by Dr. Alder four years before; and during a visit of Mr. Case and Peter Jones to England in 1831, it had been intimated to them that the London committee purposed undertaking

missions to the Indians and new settlers in Upper Canada. On his return home Mr. Case laid the matter before his own missionary committee; and an earnest appeal was made to the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee against such unfortunate rivalry of work, as contrary to the agreement of 1820, in which the English Wesleyans agreed to confine their labours to Lower Canada, and the American missionaries to limit theirs to Upper Canada, the town of Kingston, as a military station, being made an exception. The reply to this remonstrance was that this agreement was made with the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, and not with the now independent Methodist Episcopal Church of Canada, a reply which was valid neither in law, equity, nor Christian charity.

It is not surprising that United Empire Loyalists, who, for loyalty's sake, had just severed themselves from their parent church, and who had just entered upon the onerous task of building up a loyal Canadian Methodism in the face of great difficulties, should feel deeply wounded and discouraged by such treatment from their English brethren, who refused to them as Canadians the consideration accorded to the Methodist Church of the United States. The difficulty of their position was enhanced by another circumstance. Their Indian missions providently placed in their hands by the remarkable conversion of over a thousand pagan

Indians since 1824, were a heavy financial burden. Up to the time of their independence, and for two or three years after, they had received aid from the United States. In 1831 they were induced to make an appeal to England, with the result that they received the intimation already referred to and a gift of £300. It is difficult to resist the conclusion that the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee was at this time under other influence than that which Dr. Carroll so charitably assigns, the belief "that the provincial conference had more missionary ground than it had men and means to occupy." But setting this question aside, the Canadian Methodists, after serious deliberation over the situation, first in their missionary committee and subsequently in their conference, resolved to seek a union with the English Wesleyans. By the terms of this union the identity of their conference and church was to be preserved, and to be related to the British conference after the model of the Irish Wesleyan conference. But their missions, including both the Indian missions and missions to the new settlements, were handed over to the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee to be controlled by a superintendent appointed from England. This arrangement seemingly retained for the Canadian conference the control of its own work, and granted to the English Methodism what it sought, the new mission field. It also relieved the Canadian conference of the heavy financial responsibility of the

missionary work, which was entirely undertaken by the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee, to which the Canadian conference contributed its missionary funds.

Up to this point the basis of union seems reasonable and just from the standpoint of both bodies, and most likely to result in the best interests of Methodism and religion. But there were two ominous facts behind the entire arrangement which were portentous of future trouble. One was the fact that the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee were already committed to a subsidy from the colonial office of the British government. The other was the fact that the Canadian Methodist conference was most decidedly, by public conference action, committed to opposition to the government policy on the questions of an established state church and the clergy reserves. These questions were not referred to in the articles of union. Both parties were aware of the facts, for the previous correspondence indicates such knowledge on the part of the English committee, and that correspondence was afterwards pleaded as if it were a stipulation of the union. There is nothing to shew that it was so intended or understood. On the other hand there is nothing to shew that the Canadian conference protested against the position of the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee. If these difficulties were at all referred to in the negotiations, the reference was verbal, and would

seem to have amounted to a tacit understanding that the unpleasant facts would be ignored, each body being responsible for its own action. If such was the case the hope was illusory, the unpleasant facts would not disappear, and to no one did they cause more trouble than to Mr. Ryerson himself.

Further difficulties arose from two provisions of the basis of union adopting the English form of church government and an English presidency. These soon became the occasion of serious trouble. Of Mr. Ryerson's personal relations to the preliminary negotiations we have no record. Probably as a younger man he deferred to his seniors. But his attitude seems clear from the subsequent history. At the close of the negotiations with Dr. Alder at the conference of 1832, he at first refused to allow his name to be put in nomination for editor. Later he assented, but James Richardson was elected editor. Mr. Ryerson was elected representative to England for the purpose of the negotiations with the British conference. In those negotiations he was entirely bound by the articles of union to which his conference had agreed. Six years later, when the difficulties arising from the union were approaching a crisis, it was claimed that he was bound by other matters of verbal agreement between Mr. Alder and the leading representatives of the Canadian conference. That there had been conversation on the two points of the political relations of *The Christian Guardian*,

and on the grant from the British government to the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee of a subsidy from the casual and territorial revenue, there seems to be no room for doubt. That the Canadians assented to the general principle that *The Guardian* should not intermeddle in politics is probably also correct; as also that they agreed to leave the responsibility of accepting aid from the government entirely to the British conference without interference on their part. But the evidence seems clear that they reserved their right to independent action on the questions of a state church and the clergy reserves, as these were not merely political but also religious questions. That this was the exact position of affairs appears, first of all, from the fact that before the British conference, when presenting the Canadian case, Mr. Ryerson made a full historic statement vindicating the action of the Canadian conference and Methodist people, as well as the course of *The Guardian* on these points. It is further confirmed by the fact that when in England Mr. Ryerson presented to the secretary of state for the colonies the complete case for the Canadian opponents of an established and endowed church in Canada. In this presentation he sets forth that the English Church is not the established church in Canada; replies to the petition of the English Church in Canada; defends the Methodists as to their loyalty, work and numbers, and concludes by pressing that the reserves

be not invested in the home government; that they be not given to the English Church; that they be not divided among the Canadian Protestant churches, but that they be sold and the proceeds applied for education. Before this presentation was sent to the colonial secretary, it was endorsed by at least one of the English missionary secretaries.

Again, after his return to Canada, Mr. Ryerson was elected once more to the editorial chair. Almost his first work was the publication of this presentation in *The Guardian.* At the same time he claims that his views on these great questions are unchanged, and that he will maintain them as consistently as ever. These facts seem to prove that the clergy reserve question and the state church question in Canada were reserved in the general understanding that the Canadian conference and *The Guardian* were to refrain from interference in politics. Mr. Ryerson's subsequent course, resulting finally in the disruption of the union, is further confirmation of this. Possibly these facts as they became generally known to the friends of reform, and especially to the Methodist people, would have quieted the fears that their political freedom had been betrayed by union, but for another product of Mr. Ryerson's facile pen which appeared at the same time. And yet this was perhaps no less conducive to the best interests of the country than his previous battle for equal civil rights.

While in England, from March to August, he had abundant opportunities of becoming acquainted with English institutions and people. The results he gave to the readers of *The Guardian* in a series of articles entitled "Impressions." The first of these dealt with political parties and leaders in England. These he divided into ultra-Tories, whom he described as tyrants and bigots; moderate Tories, whom he praises as men distinguished for justice, conscientiousness and religion; Whigs, who act from expediency, whom he describes as including the infidels and socinians, and as being republicans with a king instead of a president, and as an obstacle to true reforms. There can be no doubt that in this article Mr. Ryerson's true political sympathies appear. As a United Empire Loyalist he was himself a moderate Conservative, and already Canadian reform was developing a radical wing with which he could have no affinity. It is not at all impossible that he already discerned that the goal of this radical tendency was rebellion or annexation, and that the articles were written to awaken the loyal fears of Methodists that they might not be led into a compromising political position. If so they served their purpose, and it was his boast in later times that not a member of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada was implicated in the rebellion.

But the "Impressions" fell like a spark in a tinder box among the Canadian radicals, and the

next issue of Mr. Mackenzie's *Colonial Advocate* contained the following: "*The Christian Guardian*, under the management of our reverend neighbour Egerton Ryerson, has gone over to the enemy, press, types and all, and hoisted the colours of a cruel and vindictive Tory priesthood. His brother George, when sent to London, became an easy convert to the same cause, and it appears that the parent stock were of those who fought to uphold unjust taxation, stamp acts and Toryism in the United States. The contents of *The Guardian* to-night tell us in language too plain, too intelligible to be misunderstood that a deadly blow has been struck in England at the liberties of the people of Upper Canada by as subtle and ungrateful an adversary in the guise of an old and familiar friend as ever crossed the Atlantic. The Americans had their Arnold, and the Canadians have their Egerton Ryerson." It is quite unnecessary to follow the political storm, of which this is a first gust, through all its tempestuous course during the next three years. It resulted as Mr. Ryerson had partially foreseen and predicted, in a check to the reform movement in 1836, in the rebellion in 1837, and in the final triumph of constitutional reform in 1840.

But before we turn our attention to these final results, we must take note of an ecclesiastical tempest scarcely less violent, and much more extended in its results. In fact, say what men would, and do what they could to prevent it, at this period

religion and politics were inevitably intermingled. The party in power was an ecclesiastical as well as a political party, and its policy was an ecclesiastical as well as a political policy, and men could not contend for their political rights without religious feeling, nor could they defend their religious liberties without political weapons. But at this time the most violent animosities were to be found in the political arena, and to a large number their political rights were quite as dear as any other. But there were purely ecclesiastical questions which were to co-operate with the political suspicions already aroused in creating the new struggle. It not infrequently happens that a progressive spirit in politics is associated with the conservative spirit in religious or ecclesiastical matters. Mr. Gladstone affords a good example. The Methodist union involved a large change in the polity of the church. Into its particulars it is by no means necessary that we should now enter. It is sufficient to say that the change raised a number of questions as to the constitution of Methodism, the rights of the laity, the orders of the ministry and so forth, which the subsequent progress of the church to a higher ground has completely left behind. They are many of them now ecclesiastical antiquities. Others involved fundamental principles of religious liberty which are now fully recognized under the new constitution of the reunited church. Before the union of Canadian and British Methodism had been

in existence two years, these forces brought about a schism, which left the main body in 1835 just about where it stood in 1832.

But this was not to be the end of ecclesiastical disaster to Methodism. Immediately after the rebellion, Mr. Ryerson, after an interval of three years, one-half of which had been spent in England on college matters, was again called in 1838 to the editorial chair of *The Guardian*. It was the juncture at which the great constitutional and religious questions which had been pending for years in Upper Canada were about to be settled, and it was admitted by all that at this time his influence should once more be felt through the official journal of the church. With all his former earnestness of purpose and vigour of argument he applied himself to the question of the clergy reserves, which was now the centre of the religious or ecclesiastical side of the matter. *The Guardian* was used with great power as of old, and a new volume of letters, addressed to the Hon. W. H. Draper, discussed the entire question in its legal and historical aspects, supported distinctly the voluntary system as the only religious system suitable to a country like Canada, and advocated the application of the clergy reserves to the purposes of education. In the progress of affairs towards what seemed to promise a settlement, but which was finally found to be a delusive hope, it was proposed to divide the reserves between the several Protestant bodies, allowing all

to use their share for such purposes as they might judge right. Under this proposal the representatives of the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee insisted that as this settlement was to terminate all religious grants from other sources, and they had been the recipients of a grant from the casual and territorial revenue of the British crown, they should be the recipients of the apportionment of the clergy reserves. Mr. Ryerson, on the other hand, insisted that as this was a Canadian question, and the apportionment to Canadian churches of a fund derived from the sale of Canadian lands, the Canadian conference should receive and control the apportionment, which he proposed to devote to the work of education. In a few months the dispute led to another schism in Canadian Methodism, and at the census of 1842 Methodism stood divided between three major bodies and a minor group, as follows:—

Canadian Wesleyan Methodists	32,313
British Wesleyan Methodists	23,342
Episcopal Methodists	20,125
Other Methodist Bodies	7,141

Such an outcome of the policy and convulsions of ten years can scarcely be regarded in any other light than as a disaster. It was the very outcome which in 1832 all parties were seeking by right methods or wrong to prevent, viz., a divided and weakened Methodism. The question is natural—what were the causes of such a result? A further

question is almost unavoidable—where lay the mistake, and who was to blame?

The causes of this misfortune lay in no single circumstance, nor yet in the action of any single individual. They lay in the meeting at various points of institutions and ideas which had grown up on opposite sides of the Atlantic and embodied in the life of this young country thoroughly antagonistic elements. Between these elements, whether in the political or the religious field, a conflict was inevitable. Well meant efforts at compromise might postpone it for a little, but they scarcely secured even a truce. Peace could be secured only by victory, and that victory was certain to be on the side of the young free life of the new world, before which the effete and already corrupting ideas and forms of the old world must certainly go down. Crown colony absolutism must inevitably disappear before the sturdy Anglo-Saxon capacity for self-government. Aristocratic officialism must certainly give way before the rising spirit of independence and the asserted rights of the people. And in the religious field the voluntary principle full of spiritual zeal and life and appealing to the religious conscience and intelligence for its support, could not fail to displace all forms dependent on state aid and endowment for support. The English Church was only saved from utter failure by being forced back upon the powers of its own spiritual life. The conflict of fifty years, through which our young

country passed, was inevitable, and its unfortunate results were a part of the price of our political and religious liberties.

If we ask where was the mistake, the answer is: the first mistake was in the attempt to transplant to this new world the decadent institutions of the old world. Whether that mistake was made on the larger scale in the Constitutional Act of 1791; or on a minor scale in the policy and ambitions of English Methodism, it was only a mistake. English Methodism has long since rectified that mistake at home, and now almost unanimously casts in her lot with the free churches of England. The subserviency to and dependence upon the established church which prevailed there seventy years ago have given place to an independent church life, independent politically as well as financially and spiritually. This result was not reached without sore conflict, and before the demon was exorcised, English Methodism was well-nigh as sorely riven as Canadian Methodism.

The second mistake lay in either a partial compromise or an unconscious compromise of the young life of progress with the opposing forces. That compromise was probably disguised even from those who made it. They were seeking not loaves and fishes, as they were sometimes slanderously said to be doing, but, as they supposed, the unity and peace of the church and the furtherance of the gospel. They thought that their responsibility was

discharged by asserting the voluntary principle for themselves; and permitting others to act according to their own convictions of right. In seven short years the development of circumstances made such a working arrangement impossible, and the union became a rope of sand. In the meantime all those whose convictions were such that no compromise was possible had also separated and formed a third Methodist Church.

Who was to blame? In one sense no one was altogether blameworthy. It must be borne in mind that the fundamental principles which appear so clear to us through the development of subsequent history were two generations ago but very imperfectly apprehended even by the clearest minds. Men were convinced of them rather by an instinctive feeling than by reason. They felt injustice, revolted against submission to arrogance, were spurred on to action by manly independence and generous ambition, before they understood the great ethical principles towards which they were making progress. And they moved towards these results, as the world of humanity has ever moved, in two grand divisions, the one restless, impatient, eager, impetuous, dissatisfied with the past, impatient for the lifting of the veil of the future; the other cautious, and timid, clinging to the seen and tried, and even asserting that it alone is eternal, immutable and divine. It is not given to mortals in such historic movements to be infallible; and in

awarding praise or blame we must credit their good intentions.

But, on the other hand, all were more or less to blame, inasmuch as the individual passions and frailties of humanity added fuel to the fire, and so aggravated the evils which are inseparable from such a conflict of moral forces. But after we have said this, as we see such men as William Case, James Richardson and Egerton Ryerson stand at the parting of the ways, those of us who knew them all will most heartily acknowledge that few men of any age could have acquitted themselves better under the circumstances. As this later mistake was the mistake of Methodism, so Methodism alone was the sufferer. The healing of her schisms was to take nearly half a century, and was not to be accomplished till all the actors in the original struggle had passed away. But her misfortunes tended on the whole to the political redemption of the country. Methodism has, in fact, been closely identified with every forward step in the history of Upper Canada. She was present at its foundations as the chief agency for the maintenance of moral and religious life among the first settlers. Her people formed the first influential body to protest against the incubus which threatened her civil and religious liberty. Her self-sacrifice of early religious attachments rendered permanent the attachment of the colony to the British empire. And now her very divisions were to be made subservient in the

order of an over-ruling Providence to the more perfect establishment of civil and religious liberty in the country. The introduction of British Methodism was a conservative influence at a point where a conservative influence was essentially necessary. The later growth to extensive influence of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the severance of the Canadian Wesleyans from the British once more reinforced the ranks of reform and progress at a point when powerful forces in this direction were needed; and thus a divided Methodism, while the least political of all our Canadian churches, has been most potential in the political advancement of the province. But this will appear more fully as we turn back for a few years to follow up another chapter in the life work of Mr. Ryerson as one of the makers of Canada.

CHAPTER V

MR. RYERSON IN THE POLITICAL ARENA

DOWN to 1833 Mr. Ryerson's work in its interest and motive was purely religious. He was a Methodist preacher standing for the rights and liberties, the interests and prosperity of the church and people which he represented. The circumstance that these rights and interests must be maintained on the side of their political relations was entirely beyond his control. The circumstance that they coincided with the principles of one political party, and that they were invaded and threatened by the policy of the other, was also a matter beyond his control. The party with which he acted was not the party of his hereditary sympathies or of his settled political convictions, so far as he had formed any; but he was working not for political party or policy, but for religious freedom and equal civil rights. So far as one may judge he was as sensible as any other clergyman of that time of the gravity of unnecessary intermeddling with politics; and the concessions made to Dr. Alder in 1832 were doubtless due in part to the influence of this principle on his own mind and those of his associates. So far was he from having formed any new or progressive political theories

that it may be questioned whether he had fully comprehended the importance and far-reaching influence of the voluntary principle, notwithstanding the fact that it was a principle as important to religion as to political life. He was rather seeking justice under the existing constitution of government than such a change of political constitution as would conform the government to the will of the people. His method, too, had been appeal to argument and free discussion by the use of the press. We have no intimation that he took any part in political meetings or conventions, or in the elections, or in the petitions which moved the legislative assembly to action. For the first time, so far as we can learn, in 1833 he stepped aside from this guarded course by becoming the bearer to England of a petition, signed by 20,000 people, setting forth the grievances of the Canadian people, and praying that the clergy reserves be devoted to education. The passage of the Reform Bill in 1832 and the accession to power of the Whigs under Earl Grey had doubtless raised hopes in the minds of the advocates of Canadian reform that their cause might be undertaken by the home government. In the fulfillment of this mission he not only presented the petition of which he was the bearer, but also, as we have seen, supported it by an able presentation of the entire Canadian case to the secretary of state for the colonies. At this time, also, he gave close attention to the debates in the British House

of Commons and studied the English political parties and party leaders with careful scrutiny. We have already referred to the results of this new experience, as embodied in the series of papers known as the "Impressions," published in *The Guardian* in November, 1833. These studies, without doubt, shaped more definitely Ryerson's future political opinions and conduct. Of the English parties, the moderate Tories represented by Mr. Gladstone secured his most complete approval as guided by justice and religion. The ultra Tories and even the Duke of Wellington seemed too near akin to the Canadian Tories—arrogant, despotic and bigoted; while the Whigs seemed to be too much governed by "expediency." But of all the English political parties the most abhorrent to him seemed to be the Radicals, and these, unfortunately, were the friends and almost representatives in the English parliament of the Canadian party of constitutional reform. We have already seen how the "Impressions" affected Mr. Mackenzie's attitude towards Mr. Ryerson. The effect of these first studies of English politics was scarcely less pronounced on the mind of Mr. Ryerson himself. Seeing danger both to British monarchical government and to religion and morality in the principles of the English Radicals, he began to be suspicious of their Canadian friends. The treatment which he received from the reform press on his return home certainly did not tend to allay this feeling; and the

extreme language which they used and the covert threats they uttered led him to a full conviction that they were secretly meditating the erection of a republic in Canada, or the annexation of the province to the United States. This conviction he did not hesitate to express thirty years later. It cannot be said, in view of subsequent events, to have been an altogether groundless suspicion, and yet it did injustice to the great body of honest reformers, including many who were still Methodists, though now separated from the Wesleyan body.

For two years Mr. Ryerson contended, as editor of *The Guardian*, against this new and now rapidly increasing danger, at the same time endeavouring to maintain, as best he could, his old-time position of contention against a state church and for equal civil rights in religious matters. Speaking three years later of his efforts at this time, he says: "It will be seen that the object I have had in view at all times and under all circumstances was a just, liberal, and popular, as well as constitutional government, in this province. The majority of the late House of Assembly (*i.e.*, the House prior to the election of 1836) put it out of my power to act with them because they made the clergy reserve question subservient to other objects which I had never embraced and with which I could not identify myself individually nor the Methodists as a body, whatever might be the free opinions of the individual members."

In the year 1835 the Rev. E. Evans was elected to the editorial chair, and Mr. Ryerson, though still a member of the "Committee for Guarding our Religious Privileges," was relieved of the responsibility which had devolved upon him for the past two years. During the course of the year he proceeded to England to seek funds and a charter for the new academy, now nearing completion. On arriving in England he soon found that his suspicions—or rather convictions—as to the tendencies of Mr. Mackenzie's policy were confirmed by rumours, which appear to have originated with Mr. Hume, that Canada was quite prepared to declare her independence and to set up a republican government. This called out one of his strongest and most famous pamphlets, a series of letters to *The Times* on "The Affairs of the Canadas." The object of these letters was the vindication of the loyalty of Canada against the "machinations and misstatements of Messrs. Hume and Roebuck, shewing from their own letters to Messrs. Papineau and Mackenzie that they were the first promoters of the project." But while thus maintaining and vindicating Canadian loyalty to the British crown and British institutions, he was by no means unmindful of the questions which disturbed the colony so long as they remained unsettled, and in an interview with Lord Glenelg and Mr. Stephen, he discussed the clergy reserve question, the legislative council, and the executive council. What his

proposals were on these three important questions does not now appear. They were certainly more conservative than those which finally prevailed under the constitution of 1840, and probably more of the nature of administrative than of constitutional reform. As his letters to *The Times* were conservative in their tendency and intended to prove that the people would be satisfied by a righteous administration of the existing constitution, this was probably also the purport of his recommendations to Lord Glenelg. If so, his views had already been anticipated.

It is very certain that English statesmen were now more perfectly informed on Canadian affairs, and quite prepared to inaugurate a new policy, though not so radical as that proposed by Mr. Mackenzie in his "Seventh Report on Grievances." Sir Francis Bond Head had been sent to the province in the preceding January with instructions which, if carried out in a liberal, conciliatory spirit, might still have prevented the outbreak of the now ominous storm. The people were certainly expecting great things from him, and when, in 1834—shortly after his entrance on office,—he appealed to them on the ground of loyalty and the constitution, he was sustained by a large majority. But "it was not," as Mr. Ryerson says in reviewing this period a little later, "on the ground of the constitution in utter opposition to every kind of reform. It was by his taking his stand upon the constitution

in connection with the elaborate conciliatory despatch of Your Lordship to him, dated December 15th, 1835, and the elaborate conciliatory despatch of the Earl of Ripon, dated November 8th, 1832, to which Your Lordship referred him as his guide; it was by his assuring the people of Upper Canada in every possible form of address that if they would support him, he would 'correct every grievance' according to the letter and spirit of those conciliatory instructions, while he maintained the happy constitution inviolate." This conciliatory policy of just, and impartial, and liberal administration of the existing form of government had doubtless been Mr. Ryerson's own ideal of reform in Upper Canada. And it would appear that even early in 1836 he was not without faith in this as a political remedy. This faith, however, was to be rudely shaken by subsequent events. Sir Francis Bond Head did not fulfill "the expectations which his promises and pledges had created. His administration in financial as well as in ecclesiastical and general affairs fell so far short of [these] expectations that he was aware that he would have been left in the minority in his own House of Assembly during the late (1838) session, had it not been for the insurrection."

Such was the political course of Mr. Ryerson up to the rebellion of 1837-8—an earnest pressure for such administration of the government as would secure equal civil rights, and just and faithful

administration, and religious liberty to all His Majesty's subjects, while at the same time he was not in sympathy with any radical constitutional changes.

Sir Francis Bond Head's administration terminated in March, 1838. A month later Mr. Ryerson wrote to a leading member of the government in England in the terms which we have just quoted, and once more took his stand maintaining the cause of the people of Upper Canada against the dominant oligarchy. At the following conference he was again elected to the editorial chair under circumstances and influences which clearly appear from the following letter written by Dr. Stinson to the Rev. John Ryerson:—"I am quite of your opinion that Bro. Egerton [Ryerson] ought to take *The Guardian* next year. There is a crisis approaching in our affairs which will require a vigorous hand to wield the defensive weapon of the conference. There can be no two opinions as to whom to give that weapon. We now stand on fair grounds to maintain our own against the encroachments of the oligarchy, and we must do it or sink into a comparatively uninfluential body. This must not be." Such was the opinion even of the representative of the London Wesleyan Missionary Committee, who, after five years' residence in Canada, now understood and at least in part sympathized with the situation.

Mr. Ryerson was now once more fairly in the field of battle for religious liberty and equal civil

rights and against a state church and a political oligarchy. In accepting this official position, to which was added the further responsibility of being secretary and convener of the Committee for the Protection of Civil and Religious Privileges, he at once fully and clearly defined his platform both before the conference and in his editorial inaugural. He says:—"In respect to the ecclesiastical affairs of this province I still adhere to the principles and views upon which I set out in 1826. I believe the endowment of the priesthood of any church in this province will be an evil to that church, as well as impolitic in the government. In accordance with the declaration put forth by several principal ministers in the Methodist Church in January last, I believe that the appropriation of the proceeds of the clergy reserves to general educational purposes will be the most satisfactory disposal of them that can be made. If in the way of such a disposal of the clergy reserves insuperable obstacles should be thrown or found to exist, although I believe nothing is impossible with the Earl of Durham in these provinces, I think the next best settlement of that question will be to divide the proceeds of the clergy reserves among different religious denominations in proportion to what is raised by each, leaving to the discretionary disposal of each religious body its own apportionment." . . . . "To the very natural and important inquiry, in relation to civil affairs 'Do you intend to be neutral?' I

answer 'No, I do not,' and for this simple reason:—I am a man, am a British subject, am a professing Christian, and represent a British community. The present is a period in the affairs of this province in which no man of intelligence or consideration can be safely or justifiably neutral. The foundation of our government is being laid anew, the future character and relations and destinies of the country are involved in pending deliberations, the last whisper of rebellion is to be silenced in the land. My decision, however, is to be not one of party but of principle; not one of passion but of conviction; not one of partial proscription but of equitable comprehensiveness. To be explicit as well as brief, I am opposed to the introduction of any new and untried theories of government. I assume that this country is to remain a portion of the British empire, and view every measure, not in reference to every or any abstract political theory, however plausible that theory may be, but in reference to the well-being of the country in connection with Great Britain. I take my stand upon the established constitution of the country as expounded by royal despatches, and as illustrated by the usages of the British parliament, British courts of justice, and the common law of England. Nothing more is wanted to render the province happy and prosperous, than the practical and efficient application to every department of our government and to our whole system of legislation of the principles and

instructions laid down in the despatch of the Earl of Ripon addressed to Sir John Colborne, dated November 8th, 1832, and the despatch of Lord Glenelg, addressed to Sir Francis Bond Head, dated December 15th, 1835."

To the platform thus candidly set before the church and the country, we think it must be admitted Mr. Ryerson held fast during the two stormy years which followed. It was a time of intense excitement both in church and state. Political parties became more distinct than ever before; the Wesleyan Methodist Church was rent in twain on an issue in part ecclesiastical and yet growing out of the political situation; recriminations and imputations abounded; in the heat of passion parliamentary proprieties were often transgressed; but throughout this strenuous period the powerful influence of Mr. Ryerson's pen and personality was courageously and continuously exerted.

To the policy proposed by the Earl of Durham and elaborated in his able report on the affairs of British North America, Mr. Ryerson gives in his editorials repeated and cordial assent. To Sir George Arthur's efforts to repel the attacks upon the province from the American frontier he gave hearty support, which appears to have been attended with the best results in leading the people to respond to the governor's call for volunteers. But while thus loyal in support of the government, he was equally faithful in pressing upon their attention the

demands of the people, and pointing out to them the still existing causes of dissatisfaction, which he regards as more dangerous than the incursion of foreign foes. These he sums up as follows:—

1. Lack of just consideration in the treatment of the volunteers in the late campaign.

2. Appointments of adventurers and youths to office over the heads of old and influential residents of the country.

3. Slanderous imputation of the insurrection to reformers generally, when four-fifths or nine-tenths of them had proved their loyalty by their acts.

4. Unnecessary severity towards the rebel prisoners.

5. Abuse of Her Majesty's government in England by the high church party.

6. The non-settlement of the clergy reserve question, and the establishment and endowment of the fifty-seven rectories.

It is noteworthy that every one of these was a question of administration or public conduct, and not of constitutional change, shewing how practical and conservative his ideas of needed reform still continued to be. But of even these moderated hopes he was as much disappointed in Sir George Arthur as he had previously been in Sir Francis Bond Head. This disappointment especially culminated in his replies to various Methodist addresses at the close of 1838 and the beginning of 1839, in which he expresses his gratification that

the Methodists were loyal, but his disappointment that they had not rallied to the support of the English Church. The significance of this complaint will appear from the fact that in the October preceding, the church party had memorialized the home government asking for a judicial decision as to their exclusive right to the reserves, or, if this was refused, that the provincial assembly might pass a bill re-investing them in the British crown, subject once more to their disposal. Both requests were refused. The opinion of the law officers of the crown had been given as far back as 1819. The management of the reserves was a subject for the Canadian House and not for the British parliament, and the imperial government expressed their unwillingness to interfere in the matter. This led to a proposition from Sir George in his speech from the throne, February 27th, 1839, for division of the fund if the bill for reinvestment failed. To the reinvestment scheme Mr. Ryerson was thoroughly opposed. He was willing to assent to division provided each denomination were free to determine the disposition to be made of its apportionment. His clearly expressed judgment favoured the appropriation of the whole proceeds to education. He accepted division only as a *dernier ressort* for the sake of settlement, and with an expressed expectation that the Methodist apportionment would in that case be devoted to education and the building of churches, and not to clerical endowment. These

views he presented not only in his weekly editorials but also in a series of ten letters to the Hon. W. H. Draper, Her Majesty's Solicitor-General. The scheme of division was thus clearly a compromise, and we have already seen how speedily it became a ground of contention in the Methodist Church itself; and how fatal were its results to the peace and unity of that body. The outcome was another division of Methodism. But that division, by re-uniting the forces of reform, probably saved the country from what would have been an unfortunate mode of settlement, giving us several endowed churches instead of one. The division bill was indeed passed under Lord Sydenham in 1840, but the forces arrayed against it by the division of Methodism, and a little later, by the disruption of the Presbyterian Church, made the apparent settlement a temporary affair. It served one important purpose in bringing the whole fund once more under the control of the Canadian government, where it remained until its settlement in 1854.

While the clergy reserve battle was thus being fought out in church and state, Mr. Ryerson's voice was also uplifted on behalf of wider reform, and his letters to Lord Normanby once more brought important aspects of the Canadian cause before the government at a time when Lord Durham's report was opening the way for the most successful remedy. Lord Durham's report reached this country early in the summer, and was the subject of universal

discussion both in the press and by the provincial legislatures. Mr. Ryerson supported Lord Durham's proposals, not only in his letters to the Marquis of Normanby, but also in reply to the attacks which identified it with the system of "responsible government proposed by the Canadian Alliance society in 1834." He dwells with special emphasis on the conservative and moderate character of Lord Durham's proposals. He says:—"Does Lord Durham propose a government purely democratic, under the name of responsible government? No. Does he propose to abolish one branch of the present government? No. Does he propose that our relations with foreign countries, or our military affairs, or the crown lands or crown resources be placed under the control of the provincial legislature? No, he proposes to place them exclusively in the control of the imperial parliament. What does His Lordship propose then? Lord Durham, except in the single case of the union of the Canadas, proposes not the alteration of a single letter of the established constitution; he proposes nothing more or less than that the people of Upper Canada within the defined and secured limits of local legislation and government, should be governed, as in England, by the men, as well as institutions of their choice." He thus vindicates his own consistency and that of thousands of the staunchest constitutionalists who had opposed Mackenzie, but were now prepared to support Lord Durham's responsible government.

A later editorial brings out the fact that the form of responsible government to which Mr. Ryerson so strenuously objected was that of purely elective institutions, such as are so largely adopted in the United States; and yet that he saw clearly that no system of responsibility was a guarantee for satisfactory administration, save responsibility to the people, directly or indirectly.

After the departure of the Earl of Durham, Mr. Poulett Thomson (afterwards Lord Sydenham) came to Canada as governor-general. He, as well as his successor, Sir Charles Bagot, received from Mr. Ryerson cordial and able support in the delicate task of introducing the new constitution, and the principles of responsible government. Lord Sydenham in the introduction of the system determined to ignore party, and in this step was supported by the wisest and best men of both the old parties. As was said by contemporary writers, such a step brought to the province "peace." Lord Sydenham's first ministry was composed of moderate men of both parties in about equal numbers, but did not include a French Canadian. At the opening of the House, Mr. Baldwin resigned because his advice for a reconstruction of the ministry was not followed, and with Mr. Hincks, LaFontaine and others, formed an opposition party, who pressed for a more explicit declaration of the principles upon which responsible government was to be conducted. For this purpose Mr. Baldwin moved a series of resolu-

tions to which Mr. Harrison moved in amendment three resolutions, said to have been drawn up by the hand of Lord Sydenham himself, and which are sometimes referred to as the Magna Charta of Canadian responsible government. These resolutions in amendment were as follows:—

1. That the head of the executive government of the province, being within the limits of his government the representative of the sovereign, is responsible to the imperial authority alone.

2. That, nevertheless, the management of our local affairs can only be conducted by him by and with the assistance, counsel and information of subordinate officers in the province.

3. That in order to preserve between the different branches of the provincial parliament that harmony which is essential to the peace, welfare and good government of the province, the chief advisers of the representative of the sovereign, constituting a provincial administration, ought to be men possessed of the confidence of the representatives of the people, thus affording a guarantee that the well understood wishes and interests of the people, which our gracious sovereign has declared shall be the rule of the provincial government, will on all occasions be faithfully represented and advocated.

By these resolutions the general principles of responsible government as involved in the relations between the crown and the representative branch of parliament were declared. The concurrence of the

two was required for all legislation and all executive acts. That concurrence is to be mediated by the executive council or ministry, who shall always command the confidence of and hence represent the representatives of the people. The prerogative of the crown is limited by the requirement that it shall be exercised by and with the assistance, counsel and information of the executive council. These principles, so fundamental in the British constitution, admit of considerable latitude of interpretation and application. They require, indeed, the concurrence of two powers before aught can be executed in government or enacted in law. But they do not define the source from which such acts or laws shall originate. Does the initiation of all legislation and executive action belong to parliament or to the ministry, and is the prerogative of the crown merely judicial, revisory and negative? It is upon this question that the character of British institutions as affording a perfectly free government must ultimately depend. The answer gives the advantage of positive power to one side or other of the two estates. This answer has not been given by positive constitutional declaration, but by procedure established by usage. From the date of the constitutional or limited monarchy in 1688, that usage has passed through a process of evolution. It is true that all our parliamentary language and the terms of all commissions to office and warrants for executive acts imply the supreme authority

of the crown. But to-day in practice, if we reckon the executive council as an expression of the power of the people, the initiative has largely passed to that side. The calling to his councils of a new body of advisers is now the most important act of initiative on the part of the crown, and even then he calls a leader, giving him wide discretion in the selection of his associates.

But we have not to go very far back in the history of British constitutional monarchy to find a time when the crown exercised a far more positive and initial influence in the work of government. Even in 1841 when responsible government was being introduced in Canada, the change which took place between the days of George III. and Victoria was not yet complete. It is thus by no means surprising that during the first ten years of responsible government in Canada, there should be conflict between advanced Liberal and Conservative ideas on this point. This arose the more easily inasmuch as up to this time the executive council, representing not the people, but the crown and the governor, had been in a position to control the whole policy of the country, the representative assembly possessing a power which could do little but object and set forth grievances. It is possible that with the incoming of the new system the reformers expected too much. It may be that the colonial governors, acting under a sense of responsibility to the home government, and with express

reserve of all questions affecting imperial interests, were disposed to assert too positive an influence over the policy of the Canadian government. It is certain that not till the coming of Lord Elgin was there a clear understanding established on these delicate points. Certain it is that almost from the beginning, notwithstanding the wisdom of the measures proposed both by Lord Sydenham and his successor, Sir Charles Bagot, there was dissatisfaction on the part of the reformers. An attempt to allay this by a reconstruction of the ministry, in which the reformers had a majority and the French Canadians were represented, served only to bring the matter to a crisis. Some minor appointments and the reserve of the Secret Societies' Bill, aimed at the Orange Societies, served to precipitate a conflict between the governor-general and his ministers, and led finally to an appeal to the country. It was at this crisis that Dr. Ryerson, now president of Victoria College, once more took a prominent place in the political arena in defence of Sir Charles Metcalfe. On the opposite side of the conflict new names came into prominence, especially George Brown and Adam Ferguson. The leaders in parliament were W. H. Draper and Robert Baldwin.

The facts from which the crisis was precipitated were two—the appointment of a clerk of the peace in Dalhousie district and the reservation of the Secret Societies' Bill for Her Majesty's pleasure. Other appointments were referred to, but all were

admitted to be of minor importance. But from the outset the leaders of the reform party made a mistake both in parliamentary procedure and in political tactics. On the question of the reservation of the bill against the secret societies the governor was so clearly within his rights that even they could not object. They could only point to the act as a proof of his sympathy with the Tory party. As to the question of appointments it appears that the appointments were actually made, and as they could be made only by the commission being signed by the responsible minister who held the provincial seal in his keeping, they had thus become formally consenting parties. To complain of an act to which they had formally assented by seal and signature was technically a violation of the faith required of Her Majesty's privy councillors. The appointments should have been prevented by the refusal of the seal and signature, and if the persons recommended by the ministry for appointment were objected to and refused by the governor, they should have resigned. The governor could make no appointment without the assistance of a responsible minister, and if he dismissed his ministry or accepted their resignation, then upon him devolved the task of finding a ministry willing to be responsible for the measure which he proposed, and able to secure the confidence of parliament. This method of procedure secures at once the prerogative and influence of

the crown and the power of parliament, and is the very essence of British responsible government. Mr. Baldwin's ministry on the other hand allowed the appointments to be made, and then sought from the governor "an understanding" that in future no appointments should be made without previously taking the advice of the council; that the lists of the candidates should in every instance be laid before the council; that the council should recommend any others at discretion; and that the governor-general, in deciding after taking their advice, "should not make any appointment prejudicial to their influence." To these stipulations or understandings the governor-general refused to commit himself, and in his refusal was sustained by the imperial government and probably by all British precedent. On this refusal the ministry, with one exception, tendered their resignations. Upon this resignation the whole matter was thrown back upon parliament, and a few months later—by the dissolution of the House—upon the country. The contest was one of the most bitter in Canadian political history, accompanied by scenes of violence and bloodshed. The reformers made not only the mistake in procedure referred to, but also what seems now a mistake in political tactics by introducing two or three extraneous elements into the arena. One was the race and provincial difficulty. They allied themselves with the French Canadians, and as a result were beaten in the

election by an Upper Canadian majority sufficient to give their opponents a majority of the whole House. This interprovincial jealousy was tided over for a time by the "double majority," and finally led to a deadlock, out of which confederation arose. Possibly the ghost is not yet laid. Another source of trouble was the prominence given to *party* in the working of responsible government. There can, we think, be no doubt that even in their communications with the governor they introduced this matter to some extent. In their discussions before the House and the country it was not concealed. They even called upon the country to define more distinctly party lines. The governor, on the other hand, took his stand on the principle that in the making of appointments he should not be asked to do so on party lines. This doubtless secured him the support of many moderate men of both parties, who desired the cessation of extreme party conflict.

Dr. Ryerson's defence of Sir Charles Metcalfe is, we think, his ablest piece of political writing. His positions are taken with the clearest judgment, and defended with consummate logical skill, and with a mastery of constitutional principles and a wealth of historical learning which is amazing when we consider his times and his opportunities. Examples and illustrations are taken from all periods of English history and made to tell on the argument and case in hand with wonderful force, and one can scarcely study the case as a grand debate without awarding

him the victory. And yet within half a dozen years the fundamental principle which no one had as yet clearly defined, but towards which the country was unconsciously tending, was admitted by all as henceforth an element of our responsible government. The whole responsibility of public policy now rests with the ministry, and there is scarcely even a practical reservation of imperial interests except of the most vital character. The royal prerogative guards the constitution and the whole people against wrong and injustice, and graciously modifies by the power of moral influence the policies of all parties, bringing them into more perfect harmony with truth, and justice, and liberty, and mercy, and at times it curbs the violence of party impetuosity and passion. But for this higher task it must stand above party and policies. Yet this result has been attained not by the destruction of the royal prerogative, which might have resulted had the reformers of 1844 secured their "stipulations," but by a mode of exercise which, perhaps, was beyond the wisest and best of men at that date.

In one respect both parties erred through fear, and each did injustice to the other. The reformers looked upon Sir Charles Metcalfe and Dr. Ryerson as the foes of responsible government, and predicted the return of the absolutism of the "family compact." We can see now no ground for such a fear. Dr. Ryerson certainly never was disposed to make a truce with the "family compact," or to submit to

the injustice of absolutism, and Sir Charles's only desire seemed to be to avoid such a one-sided distribution of government patronage as would renew the old evil in another form. On the other hand even a Liberal imperial government and Sir Charles as their representative seemed afraid to trust the young Canadian baby to walk alone, and wished to keep a good hand on its legislation and policy. They seemed to be still afraid of republican tendencies, and possibly another insurrection. We do not forget that though Canada had passed under the administration of three governors her constitution was then but four years old; and that the guiding hand of Lord Sydenham in legislation, as well as his comprehensive administration of affairs with equal favour to all parties tended to strengthen the better political life of the province and to heal the sores of the past. These things fully explain the course of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and of the Whig government at home, as well as the attitude of Dr. Ryerson in their defence. But they too were not yet fully conscious of the power of the new political life which was now becoming national, nor did they foresee either the exact form or the magnitude to which it must shortly grow.

After this contest Dr. Ryerson never again returned to the arena of general politics. His position in the educational work of the country brought him into contact with both parties, as one or the other held the reins of power. In the early fifties he

contributed some letters on the clergy reserve question, otherwise his future work was exclusively in the field of education. In 1867, as united Canada entered upon her larger life as a young dominion, he addressed to his fellow-countrymen a letter replete with wise counsels and patriotic sentiment. But in this there was but the loving advice of a father, and no more the strenuous contest of the man who is fighting the battle of national life. Reviewing his work in the political field we think we may safely say that from first to last in the three great conflicts in which it was exercised it was conservative, timely, and, in the result, for the good of the country.

CHAPTER VI

THE UNIVERSITY QUESTION

A THIRD important question involved in the early struggle of the province was that of education. The policy inaugurated as we have seen in Governor Simcoe's day was too comprehensive and far-seeing to omit this. To control the executive government, the religion and the education of the country was to mould its future at will; and while the dominant party doubtless believed they were discharging their duty by their trust, and acting for the highest interest of the country, they quite forgot the fact that the men to whom they thus extended a paternal government were men of equal capacities as men and of equal rights as citizens with themselves.

In the matter of education, the early policy projected a university and four royal grammar schools, two in the east at Cornwall and Kingston, and two in the west at Newark (Niagara) and a place undetermined. The university was reserved for York, the new capital of Upper Canada. Had this policy been carried into effect, though some of the locations might have proved unfortunate, it might have resulted, with subsequent change of location to suit the needs of the population, in a most compre-

hensive and efficient scheme of higher education. Even now, a central university with strong affiliated collegiate institutes at centres of population solves the problem of the wider diffusion of at least a portion of university education.

We have already seen that the secondary part of this scheme shaped itself into the district schools as early as 1807 and 1816. The lack of funds delayed the university part until the royal charter of 1827, and even then the only practical result was Upper Canada College, an institution answering to the royal grammar schools as originally projected.

But the entire system thus created was dominated throughout by the idea of a state church, with exclusive privileges in religion, education, and even civil power. When, therefore, in 1826, and again in 1828, Mr. Ryerson took up his pen in defence of the rights of the great majority of the people against this unjust policy, the subject of education, and, in 1828, the subject of the proposed constitution of the new university occupied a prominent place. On taking his position as editor of *The Christian Guardian* in 1829, he made full use of the columns of the new journal to awaken the country to a proper estimate of the importance of this subject, and practical results almost immediately followed. In the conference of the Methodist Church of 1829, the subject of an institution of learning was discussed, and while it was postponed for that year in order to establish *The Guardian*,

in the following year the subject was again taken up and practical measures adopted, resulting in the opening of Upper Canada Academy in June, 1836.

The Presbyterians were actuated by the same spirit, and two movements appear among them, one to establish a literary and theological institution at Pleasant Bay, in the township of Hillier, Prince Edward County, and the other to secure from the government the appointment of a theological professor on a status of equality with the professor of divinity of the English Church in the staff and council of King's College. These Presbyterian movements reached their final results in the opening of Queen's College in March, 1842. A third movement, quite independent of these two and antedating both, appears in the Upper Canadian legislative assembly. As soon as the nature of Dr. Strachan's charter and ecclesiastical chart was known in the province, the assembly prepared an address to the King on the political affairs of the country, based on a report of a select committee of the House, in which this passage closes the reference to the new university charter following an expression of strong condemnation of its exclusive sectarian provisions: "It should not be a school of political or sectarian views. It should have about it no appearance of a spirit of partiality or exclusion. Its portals should be thrown open to all, and upon none who enter should any influence be exerted to attach them to any particular creed or church. It should

be a source of intellectual and moral light and animation, from which the glorious irradiations of literature and science may descend upon all with equal lustre and power. Such an institution would be a blessing to the country, its pride and glory. Most deeply, therefore, is it to be lamented that the principles of the charter are calculated to defeat its usefulness, and to confine to a favoured few all its advantages." (*Report* of March 17th, 1828.) The address of the colonial assembly to the King brought the matter before the British House of Commons in 1828, where it was further pressed by petitions signed by thousands of Upper Canadian subjects. Mr. George Ryerson, an elder brother of Mr. Egerton Ryerson, was the bearer of these petitions. A select committee of the British House of Commons took up the matter in connection with other Canadian affairs, and in regard to the university reported in the following terms: "It cannot be doubted as the guidance and government of the college is to be vested in the hands of members of the Church of England, that in the election of professors, a preference would inevitably be shown to persons of that persuasion; and in a country where only a small proportion of the inhabitants adhere to that church a suspicion and jealousy of religious interference would necessarily be created." This declaration is followed by the recommendation of essential changes in the charter, both as to its theological faculty and the appointment of

professors generally. One of these provisions was adopted in the first amendment of the charter by the provincial legislature in 1837.

It was with the movement in the Methodist Church that Mr. Ryerson was most directly connected. During the first two or three years his official influence as editor of *The Guardian* and his personal influence as a member of the conference and church were very helpful to the committee who were struggling with the difficult task of bringing into operation a large literary institution without any aid from public sources. The following extract from an editorial in April, 1831, will indicate the character of his support, as well as the principles upon which the new institution was being founded:—"It is the first literary institution which has been commenced by any body of ministers in accordance with the frequently expressed wishes of the people of Upper Canada. The Methodist conference have not sought endowments of public lands for the establishment of an institution contrary to the voice of the people as expressed by their representatives; much less have they sought to acquire such endowments to erect 'essentially a missionary college' for the purpose of carrying on an extensive proselytizing warfare upon the territories of their religious neighbours. But the Methodist conference, in the manner in which they have commenced and are proceeding in the establishment of this institution, say, in effect, to the people

of Upper Canada, 'We have not laboured among you for the promotion of selfish and party purposes, but for the diffusion of pure and undefiled religion; nor have we sought or received any other subsistence than the voluntary offerings of your liberality. Desirous of promoting more extensively the interests of the rising generation and of the country generally, we have resolved upon the establishment of a seminary of learning. We have done so upon liberal principles; we have not reserved any peculiar privileges to ourselves for the education of our own children; we have published the constitution for your examination; and now we appeal to your liberality for assistance, we feel confident that you will not withhold it; we believe your good wishes are with us in this undertaking, and we submit to your decision for the success or failure of it.'"

The undertaking proved much more arduous and costly than its promoters had anticipated. When completed the building was by far the most classic in architecture and imposing in appearance of any up to that time erected in Upper Canada for educational purposes, not excepting Upper Canada College; and instead of costing £6,000 as estimated, the cost, with furnishings, reached £9,000. The perfection of the workmanship may be estimated from the fact that after seventy years the government of Ontario find it still a substantial, valuable building. The amount collected by the trustees from the Canadian

Methodist people and their friends, who by 1834 had been thoroughly canvassed, was £4,000. By that date the building was enclosed and well advanced towards completion; but the trustees, who were not a body corporate, and had hitherto proceeded entirely upon their personal responsibility, were under obligations to the banks and for private loans to the extent of £2,000. It was at this difficult juncture that Mr. Ryerson became officially connected with the college, being appointed by the trustees as their agent to England to solicit aid for the institution, and to petition the imperial government for a royal charter. The first part of this commission was to him exceedingly uncongenial, as literally it was true of him "To beg I am ashamed." But this is the letter which followed him from Mr. Lord, the English president of the Canadian conference:—"You must stay in England until the money is got. Use every effort, harden your face to flint, and give eloquence to your tongue. This is your calling. Excel in it. Be not discouraged with a dozen refusals in succession. The money must be had, and it must be begged. My dear brother, work for your life, and I pray God to give you success. Do not borrow if possible. Beg, *beg*, *beg* it all. It must be done."

But the more difficult, as well as more important part of Mr. Ryerson's commission was the securing of the royal charter. It must be borne in mind that up to this time no such legal recognition had been

afforded to a body of non-conformist ministers, either in England or in any of the colonies. A bill for the purpose of incorporating the trustees had already failed to pass the Canadian legislature. There was thus no precedent to which he could appeal, and no model which he could copy, and his sole hope was in the justice of his cause, and in the spirit, now rapidly growing in England, of equal civil and religious rights and privileges.

To grant the Methodists equal legislative, if not equal governmental support for their college, with that which had already been conceded to Dr. Strachan on behalf of the Church of England, was only a fair practical outcome of this spirit. But a technical difficulty was at once proposed by the law officers of the crown. How could a body unknown to the law be officially recognized as the recipients of a royal charter? Mr. Ryerson's legal acumen here stood him in good stead, and found a way out of the difficulty. Although the Methodist conference, as such, was as yet unknown to English law, the Methodist preacher as such had already been given a recognized legal status by the grant of legal authority for the solemnization of matrimony. Mr. Ryerson accordingly constituted his fundamental chartered body of all men so recognized by law in Upper Canada, and the charter granted to these authorized them to elect trustees and visitors who should be a body corporate for all the purposes of the college. The first legal name of

the college was Upper Canada Academy, its name at once designating its comprehensive character, offering its services to all the people of the province, and yet distinguishing it from Upper Canada College, already in operation. Both were designed to prepare the way for higher institutions of learning in the immediate future, when the number of students prepared for a university course should warrant the advance. In the race toward this goal the Methodist institution won by two years, commencing university work in 1841 and reaching its first graduating class in 1845.

Mr. Ryerson's return from his English mission was a veritable triumph of patient industry and remarkable ability devoted unsparingly to a high purpose. It was but five years since a governor-general had superciliously replied to a loyal address of the Methodist conferenee, in which they ventured to refer to their projected college, of which a stone had not yet been laid, "That the system of education which has produced the best and ablest men in the United Kingdom, will not be abandoned here to suit the limited views of the leaders of societies who perhaps have neither experience nor judgment to appreciate the value or advantages of a liberal education." Within three years Mr. Ryerson, one of the leaders referred to in this disparaging paragraph, was on his way to England with recommendatory letters from this same governor-general, who had already learned to form a truer estimate of the

Methodist people and their leaders; and now after nearly two years of arduous toil and able work for his church and his country, he returned home with the first royal charter ever granted by the imperial government for an educational institution outside of an established church, and with a fair prospect of its release from financial embarrassment. Already as the result of his labours he found, on his arrival home, the buildings completed and occupied by a promising body of teachers and pupils, under the principalship of Rev. Matthew Richey, M.A., who had opened the academy on June 18th, 1836. This step had been secured through the financial assistance which he had obtained from friends in England.

But financial difficulties were as yet by no means ended. He had received in England from Lord Glenelg instructions to the new governor-general, Sir Francis Bond Head, to recommend to the Canadian legislature a grant in assistance of the institution. Mr. Ryerson, who knew well the state of affairs in the two branches of the legislature at that date, was fully aware that this last recommendation would be of no practical service. He therefore persisted in his efforts, until in April, 1837, a few days before sailing for home, he secured further instructions from the imperial government to Sir Francis Bond Head to advance the amount, £4,100, out of the unappropriated revenues of the crown. One-half of this amount was paid in November following, in the midst of the excitement which immediately

preceded the insurrection. The balance was withheld by the governor until the whole matter was brought before parliament by petition from Mr. Ryerson. The question was carried back to Lord Glenelg, but upon report and address of the House of Assembly to the governor it was settled.

The establishment of responsible government in Canada in 1840 led to important consequences in regard to university work. During the first session of the provincial legislature a bill prepared by Mr. Ryerson was introduced, and passed both Houses, extending the charter of Upper Canada Academy under the new name of "Victoria College," so as to confer university powers. This bill received the royal assent at the hand of Lord Sydenham, August 27th, 1841. In October of that year Mr. Ryerson was appointed the first president under the enlarged charter, and opened the session on the 21st of that month. His formal inaugural took place on June 21st, 1842, and on August 3rd following he was honoured by the Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, with the degree of doctor of divinity.

The official relation to Victoria College thus begun he held for four years, during which time students flocked to the college from all parts. Among those who became eminent in after years in various walks of life were the late Judge Springer; S. S. Nelles, afterwards his successor in office; the Hon. J. C. Aikins; the Hon. Wm.

Macdougall, C.B.; J. George Hodgins, his life-long friend and associate in work; the Rev. Wm. Ormiston, D.D., one of the brightest ornaments of the Presbyterian Church; Col. Walker Powell, Adjutant-General; Stoughton Dennis, Surveyor-General; the Hon. W. H. Brouse, and James L. Biggar, M.P. Out of such materials as these were organized in four years four undergraduate classes, under a curriculum equal in extent of science, literature and philosophy to that of the best American colleges of the time. Its matriculation embraced both Latin and Greek—in the former Nepos, Cæsar, Sallust, and Virgil,—arithmetic and algebra in mathematics, with English grammar, history, geography, and elementary science. The subsequent course included four years' work in the Latin and Greek languages, four in mathematics, three in science, two years each in English constitution and history, philosophy, evidences of natural and revealed religion, Hebrew and French. Rhetoric, composition and elocution received attention throughout the course, and the study of the Greek testament and Biblical literature was also provided for.

The following words from the pen of the late gifted Dr. Ormiston give a most vivid portraiture of the impression made upon his students by Dr. Ryerson as college president: "Dr. Ryerson was at that time in the prime of a magnificent manhood. His well-developed, finely-proportioned, firmly-knit

frame, his broad, lofty brow, his keen, penetrating eye, and his genial, benignant face, all proclaimed him every inch a man. His mental powers, vigorous and well disciplined; his attainments in literature, varied and extensive; his experience, extended and diversified; his fame as a preacher of great pathos and power, widely spread; his claims as a doughty, dauntless champion of the rights of the people to civil and religious liberty, generally acknowledged; his powers of expression, marvellous in readiness, richness and beauty; his manners affable and winning; his presence magnetic and impressive,—he stood in the eye of the youthful, ardent, aspiring student, a tower of strength, a centre of healthy, helpful influences, a man to be admired and honoured, loved and feared, imitated and followed. And I may add, that frequent intercourse for nearly forty years, and close official relations for more than ten, only deepened and confirmed the impression first made. A more familiar acquaintance with his domestic, social and religious life, a more thorough knowledge of his mind and heart constantly increased my appreciation of his worth, my esteem for his character, and my affection for his person.

"Not a few misunderstood, undervalued or misrepresented his public conduct, but it will be found that those who knew him best, loved him most, and that many who were constrained to differ from him in his management of public affairs, did full justice to the purity and generosity of his motives, to the

nobility, loftiness and ultimate success of his aims, and to the disinterestedness of his manifold labours for the country and the church of Christ.

"As a teacher he was earnest and efficient, eloquent and inspiring, but he expected and exacted too much work from the average student. His own ready and affluent mind sympathized keenly with the apt, bright scholar, to whom his praise was warmly given, but he scarcely made sufficient allowance for the dullness or lack of previous preparation which failed to keep pace with him in his long and rapid strides; hence his censures were occasionally severe. His methods of examination furnished the very best kind of mental discipline, fitted alike to cultivate the memory and to strengthen the judgment. All the students revered him, but the best of the class appreciated him most. His counsels were faithful and judicious, his admonitions paternal and discriminating, his rebukes seldom administered, but scathingly severe. No student ever left his presence without resolving to do better, to aim higher and to win his approval."

While Mr. Ryerson was thus engaged in laying the foundations of Victoria College, two other colleges were being brought into operation. The Presbyterian Church had in 1839 petitioned the legislature of Upper Canada for an act of incorporation for a university at Kingston. The act was passed in 1840, but as they desired a royal charter, it was found necessary to ask for its disallowance,

and the charter was issued October 14th, 1841. The institution was accordingly opened for the reception of students on March 7th, 1842, and as the curriculum for the degree of B.A. extended over three years, the first graduates had completed their course in 1845. Finally King's College after long delay was brought into operation, and on June 8th, 1843, the inauguration took place, the college being located in the Parliament Buildings. The practical work of instruction appears to have commenced in October following, and the warrants of the first professors in arts bear date September, 1843. On March 4th, 1837, the royal assent had been given by His Excellency, the Governor-General, to a bill incorporating Regiopolis College, Kingston, under the direction of the Roman Catholic Church.

These various steps growing out of the exclusive character of the university charter obtained in 1827, and which Dr. Strachan so innocently called his charter, presented Upper Canada as early as 1843 with her university problem. There were then in operation in the province four colleges, the best equipped of which had not more than four full professors in arts. One of these, King's College, was in possession of the provincial endowment, consisting of nearly £39,000 in provincial debentures and other stock, besides a large quantity of lands. Although no building had been erected or instruction given, there was already a considerable debt against this endowment. The other colleges

were without endowments or property other than the buildings which had been erected for Victoria as already related, and real estate and buildings which had been secured by the Roman Catholic Church for Regiopolis. Queen's was as yet without buildings, and was seriously considering the problem before her. Victoria and Queen's had each been voted a legislative grant of £500, but apart from that were dependent on fees and church funds. The total number of undergraduate students in arts in the province was less than fifty, and these were divided among three colleges.

It was at this juncture that in 1843 the first effort to secure a truly provincial university was made by the Honourable Robert Baldwin. His scheme embraced a large number of the distinctive features of the Federation Act of 1887. It proposed to include all the existing colleges by removing them to Toronto; also any that might hereafter be founded. It deprived all the colleges of their degree conferring powers. It proposed to erect a central university, with teaching faculty, in which the students of all the colleges should receive instruction on equal terms. The only subjects excluded from the university course were the divinity subjects. Each college was left free to teach whatever it chose. The colleges were placed somewhat largely under the control of the central university authority or council, in which they were all equally represented; and while the university endowment

was to remain intact and for the university, for a period of four years each college was to receive a grant in aid of £500. A minimum amount invested in buildings, outfit, and endowment was required to entitle a college to claim its place and status in the university. It is said that this scheme was the work of Mr. Baldwin's own mind, having been prepared after a single interview with each of the parties concerned.

From the Anglican party, who were now in possession of the endowment, this bill met with the most uncompromising opposition. They claimed that the endowment belonged by gift of the crown to King's College exclusively; that King's College had been constituted by royal charter a Church of England institution; and that the provincial parliament had no power to interfere with either the property or the charter. They petitioned parliament for leave to present their case by counsel at the bar of the House, and the Hon. W. H. Draper was deputed for that purpose, and in an able address of over two hours laid the constitutional argument before the members.

The Presbyterians, whose college had been in operation for a year and a half, but who had not yet erected buildings, and had thus no financial complication, supported the proposed plan most heartily, and were prepared to surrender their university powers and remove to Toronto at once. In fact the whole movement originated with the

expressed desire of Queen's to take part in the provincial university. Dr. Liddell, the principal of Queen's, was a very hearty advocate of the scheme, and pressed it upon the Methodists in a series of letters to Dr. Ryerson. The Methodists, on the other hand, were in a most embarrassing position. They were now divided into three bodies, the largest numbering 32,000 and the smallest 20,000 adherents. They had only some three or four years previously completed a most exhausting effort to secure the last of the nine thousand pounds needed for the building of their college, and they were as yet entirely without endowment. The most toilsome labour of this work had, as we have already seen, fallen on Dr. Ryerson. He was now asked to leave the institution thus founded to fall back upon its previous work of an academy or minor college, and begin anew the task of founding a Methodist college in the provincial university. His reply—penned by his own hand, though presented as that of his church through resolution of the college board—is such as Methodism need never be ashamed of. The essential parts of this document are contained in the fourth and fifth resolutions, as follows:—

"4. That viewing the general objects and opinions of the University Bill in this light we cordially concur in them, and give that bill our warm approbation and support; although its present application to the Wesleyan Methodist Church as a body, from circumstances peculiar to ourselves, deprives

us of important rights and privileges which we now enjoy, without conferring upon us any corresponding advantages, since all the resources which we have been able to obtain both in this country and in England for the erection of college buildings have been expended in the completion of a commodious and expensive edifice at too great a distance from the seat of the University of Toronto to render any of its advantages available to the scholars and students of Victoria College.

"5. That in view of the peculiar inconveniences and disadvantages to which the operation of the bill must necessarily subject us, without its being in our power to enjoy the advantages of the university, we appeal to the just and enlightened consideration of the government to grant us such assistance as our peculiar circumstances suggest, and to aid us to the utmost of its power in making any arrangements which may hereafter be deemed expedient and advisable to secure to the persons under our institution the advantages of the university."

But this expression of approval and of desire as soon as possible to take part in the project did not end Dr. Ryerson's efforts on its behalf. The bill was meeting with powerful opposition on plausible constitutional grounds. Into its defence he threw himself with all his ability, energy, and learning, and in a most complete reply to Mr. Draper's address to the parliament, he proved that the

province had a right to a truly provincial university; that the original endowment was not a gift to the English Church or to a particular college, but was granted by the crown for the education of the people of Canada in response to a request from the legislative assembly of the province, and that over both the charter and the endowment, parliament—which includes the crown itself—possessed complete power, and that over both of these the present tenants had no personal rights or control, being but trustees for the people.

The political complication to which we have already referred, ending in the resignation of Mr. Baldwin and the majority of his colleagues, brought this first promising effort for the establishment of a provincial university to an end, but the fundamental principles of the whole question were developed in this first attempt at solution, and were clearly grasped and maintained both by Mr. Baldwin and Dr. Ryerson. Their effort was to build the new university into the past history of the people; to make it include rather than antagonize or destroy existing institutions; to make it comprehensive, meeting the wants, conciliating the sympathies, and enlisting the support of all the people; and finally to make it impartial, offering perfectly equal rights and privileges to all. The province was destined to wait for fifty years before another measure equally comprehensive would be proposed, and in those fifty years the university question was to

pass through six successive phases of attempted legislation and party conflict. Before this history was completed, if completed it be even yet, Robert Baldwin, Bishop Strachan, Dr. Ryerson, W. H. Draper, J. B. Robinson, R. B. Sullivan, and all the other actors in the beginning of things had passed from the scene.

The second attempt at the solution of the university question was made by Mr. Draper in 1846. The general principles of Mr. Draper's bill were the same as those presented by the Baldwin Bill, and it was supported and opposed by the same parties, and on the same grounds. Dr. Ryerson at this time defined his position in the following propositions:—

1. That there should be a provincial university furnishing the highest academical and professional education, at least in respect to law and medicine.

2. That there should be a provincial system of common school education, commensurate with the wants of the entire population.

3. That both the university and the common school system should be established and conducted upon Christian principles, yet free from sectarian bias or ascendency.

4. That there should be an intermediate class of seminaries in connection with the different religious persuasions who have ability and enterprise to establish them, providing, on the one hand, a theological education for their clergy, and, on the other

hand, a thorough English and scientific education and elementary classical instruction for those of the youth of their congregations who might seek for more than a common school education, or who might wish to prepare for the university, and who, not having the experience of university students, required a parental and religious oversight in their absence from their parents.

5. That it would be economic as well as patriotic on the part of the government to grant a liberal aid to such seminaries, as well as to provide for the endowment of a university or a common school system.

It is evident from the contemporary press that already a new principle was making its way into the university question, viz., the entire separation of the higher education from religion, leaving that entirely to the voluntary efforts of the churches. "I cannot, for the life of me, see," says a prominent editor of that time, "what religion has to do with the department of the university devoted to arts and sciences." Dr. Ryerson's view was the very opposite of this, religion with him forming an essential element in all education.

Another element in the educational problem of that time was the appearance of residential secondary schools either owned by or patronized by the principal religious denominations. Upper Canada College was really such under the control of the Church of England. Upper Canada Academy, still

continued as a preparatory adjunct of Victoria College, was another. Knox College filled for some years a similar place for the Free Church Presbyterians, and the Society of Friends were establishing another in Bloomfield. Those institutions, the outcome of the religious and intellectual spirit of the age, were destined for a time to be eclipsed by the rise of the high schools as a part of the system which Dr. Ryerson was now inaugurating; but their persistence to the present and their large extension in secondary colleges, both for young men and young women, is the best proof of their value in an educational system.

Mr. Draper's bill was lost by the carrying of an amendment to the second reading, and so ended the second attempt at the formation of a provincial university. Its failure was due to two causes. The voluntary party in the House and outside were now taking the ground that even for education no state grants should be made to churches. The church party, on the other hand, were making a most determined effort to retain control of the university and its endowment. Mr. Draper's bill suited neither, and was killed by their combined vote.

A similar fate befell the effort in 1847 made by the solicitor-general, Mr. John A. Macdonald, to solve the university problem. His bill offered the largest concessions yet tendered to the church party. He proposed to hand over to them King's

College, with the building now completed, together with an annual income of $12,000, and to give to Queen's and Victoria and Regiopolis $6,000 each. The balance of the annual income arising from the university endowment was to be expended on the district grammar schools and in promoting the teaching of scientific agriculture. This bill, known as the partition scheme, called forth the most strenuous opposition of the Liberals, who had now planted themselves firmly on the principle that the university endowment should not be divided, and that the provincial university should be completely secularized. On the other hand, it was rejected by the church party, who still claimed the whole endowment, as well as the college. The combined opposition of these two parties caused its withdrawal.

This partition bill of Mr. Macdonald was the introduction of an entirely new phase of the university question. Hitherto all were agreed on the idea of a single provincial university. The question at issue was its control in the interests of a single religious body, as opposed to the equal rights and privileges of all. Nor was there any question as to the relation of the churches and religious teaching to university education. All university reforms proposed to retain this by the incorporation of the existing colleges. The principle of historic continuity was thus maintained. There was no proposal to destroy existing institutions for the erection

of the new. Mr. Macdonald's proposition was thoroughly conservative. It proposed to do full justice to all existing institutions, but at the expense of the central university, which had now become the ideal of liberal thought. The ground of conflict was thus shifted, and henceforth the battle was to be between one secular state university and the four church colleges. Mr. Macdonald's partition bill received Dr. Ryerson's strong support, and determined his position on the university question to the end of his life, for the following reasons:

1. It appeared to him to meet the full extent of the needs of university education as at that time existing in the leading colleges of the English-speaking world. The vast modern extension of the sphere of the university was then unknown.

2. It coincided with his conservative instincts, which always led him to work with spontaneous historic growth rather than upon theory.

3. It satisfied his convictions of the need of religion as an essential part of all education.

4. He judged that the four colleges already established would afford the advantages of higher education to a larger number than would receive them in one central university.

The defeat of the Conservative government at the next election and the return of the Liberals to power, placed the university question once more in the hands of Mr. Baldwin, and his now largely advanced positions were embodied in the bill of

1849. The central idea of this bill was the complete separation of the provincial university from all ecclesiastical influence and control. The subject of divinity was excluded from the university; all religious tests, subscriptions and exercises were done away with; it was forbidden to the government to appoint an ecclesiastic on the senate, and such could not fill the office of chancellor. The only privilege offered to the outlying colleges established by the churches was the right to appoint one member of the senate, and this privilege was offered only on condition of their being deprived at once and forever of the power to confer degrees except in divinity. The central idea was the extinction of all other colleges as educational institutions and their conversion into theological schools, and this to be accomplished either by their voluntary surrender, or by the force of state-endowed competition.

It is not surprising that this bill satisfied neither the high church party, who found themselves stripped by it of the college and endowments to which they had held so tenaciously, nor the other religious bodies, who at so much sacrifice, had founded colleges of their own. It met the wishes of the thorough "voluntaries" alone, who as yet had not founded colleges of their own. It certainly was at variance with Dr. Ryerson's fundamental principles of education, which sought to combine morals and religion with intellectual culture and to unite

voluntary effort with the aid of the state. The fundamental principle of the new bill was that the state alone should control and maintain education, and that all alliance of the churches with the state was to be avoided. It cut loose from all past history of education in the province, ignored all church institutions, and built upon a purely secular foundation.

In four years' time the exclusive rigidity of this bill was broken, and a bill apparently more liberal in its attitude to outlying colleges was introduced by Mr. Hincks in 1853. Dr. Ryerson, who had strongly opposed the Baldwin Bill in 1849, in 1850 had secured legislative authority for the removal of Victoria College to Toronto; and in 1852 he addressed a series of open letters to the Hon. Sir Francis Hincks, now the head of the Canadian government, outlining a most comprehensive and patriotic plan for the establishment of the provincial university upon a basis which might secure the coöperation of all the sections of the community.

The Hincks Bill of 1853 did not follow Dr. Ryerson's outline, which anticipated some of the most important features of the Federation Act of 1887, but was modelled on the example of the London University, and possibly implied, though it did not specifically enact, the partition features of Mr. Macdonald's bill of 1847. It made more liberal provision for the affiliation of the outlying colleges, separated the teaching faculty of arts from the university, making provision for its support

as a state college from the university endowments, and provided that the balance of income from the university endowment after meeting the wants of the university and college should be at the disposal of the legislature for the aid of higher education. These provisions were accepted by the outlying colleges as a promise of more harmonious relations, and they all accepted affiliation with the reconstructed university, and for a time their representatives took their places on the university senate.

Parliamentary acts, however, can change names and constitution, but not spirit, policy or nature; they can constitute an institution the provincial university in form and theory without making it such in the affections and support of the people or in its spirit and attitude toward the other educational institutions of the country. The new university and state college consisted still very largely of the same men; its policy was still the policy of the old state church college, to use the provincial endowments as the rival of the outlying colleges. The Baldwin Act had, as we have seen, converted this policy into one of extinction; and although the new act pointed towards a better way, there was under it not the slightest effort toward a combination of resources and colleges for the building up of a truly provincial university. If such a result was ever to come it could under this policy come only when the outlying colleges had been destroyed by the force of an unfair financial competition. These

colleges had from the very first maintained the attitude of willingness or even desire for friendly coöperation in some form to build up a truly provincial university. They were now doomed to see all hope in this direction extinguished.

Dr. Ryerson had from the first been a leader in this movement. He had throughout opposed all sectional and exclusive policies, whether ecclesiastical or political. When, therefore, the sectional character of the university policy—for the policy rather than the constitution was at fault—culminated in the conflict of 1860, he threw himself with all his force and ability into it and in favour of a comprehensive policy. The particular form of that policy was not the best. It still clung to the old partition scheme of John A. Macdonald, which would have been a fatal mistake. The conflict resulted for a little time in increased legislative aid to the denominational colleges, in itself a very doubtful advantage. But it embittered the state university party, and at the first opportunity all state aid was taken from the denominational colleges, their affiliation with the provincial university was cancelled, and they were left, as was supposed, to die, but in reality to renew their youth when once they were left to live by the merit of their work and the truth of the principles upon which they were founded. Dr. Ryerson was their consistent friend and supporter by pen and tongue and purse to the end. He believed in religion and morals in all education.

He believed in a comprehensive unity of all forces in a truly provincial system. His chief mistake was, perhaps, that he did not unflinchingly apply the voluntary principle to the religious side of the work. It, perhaps, was financially impossible in his time. If so, then even this was not an error on his part, for in maintaining the religious principle even at the compromise of the other he has preserved for us a goal which is most abundantly vindicated by the strength and influence of the religious colleges to-day, and the reflex influence of which has been of the greatest benefit to the state college itself.

CHAPTER VII

FOUNDING THE COMMON SCHOOL SYSTEM

IN Mr. Ryerson's last interview with Lord Sydenham, shortly before the accident which resulted in His Excellency's death, the governor discussed with him his contemplated measures for the improvement of popular education, and proposed that Mr. Ryerson should take charge of that important work. The matter was again considered under Sir Charles Bagot's administration in 1842, but the Rev. Mr. Murray was appointed. Near the close of 1843 Sir Charles Metcalfe conferred with Dr. Ryerson on educational matters and again suggested that he should undertake the necessary work, which had made no progress under Mr. Murray's tenure of office. A few weeks later the rupture took place between the governor and his cabinet. At first Mr. Ryerson was disposed to take a view unfavourable to the position assumed by the governor. But after a careful study of the question involved, as it was set forth by the newly organized Reform Association, he took up his pen in defence of Sir Charles, at the same time avowing his intention to accept no office until this question had been settled by the voice of the people at the polls. At the election in the autumn of 1844, the new

advisers of Sir Charles, led by Mr. Draper, were sustained, and in September Dr. Ryerson was appointed superintendent of schools under the act of 1843, with permission to visit the United States and Europe for the purpose of studying the best systems then in operation before preparing a new bill for the improvement of common schools in Upper Canada. On this tour of investigation and study, Dr. Ryerson started in November, 1844, returning early in 1846. We cannot follow him through the various interesting episodes of this visit, but before taking up his work on his return, as it appears in the Common School Act of 1846 and the reports which preceded and followed immediately on that measure, it will be necessary to review briefly the state of the common schools of Canada West when he accepted office.

The elementary schools of Upper Canada had been organized into something approaching system by the acts of 1841 and 1843. Parliamentary aid to the extent of £20,000 annually supplemented the local effort. Schools were generally established in all the older settled parts of the country, and were to some extent under the oversight of a provincial superintendent and local superintendents. But there were several fatal defects in the so-called system. The central authority was weak. It was authorized by the law to apportion the grant, to receive reports, and to make regulations for the schools. But it lacked authority to enforce its regulations or

to secure proper reports, and its principal function was the distribution of the parliamentary grant. The local authorities, consisting of the district or township superintendent, the district, town or city municipal council, and the trustees, were possessed of large powers, but were generally incompetent for their exercise. The powers and duties of the local superintendents were the examination and licensing of teachers, the inspection of the schools, the making of reports to the provincial superintendent and the distribution of the provincial and county grant. But as these duties were associated most frequently with other employment, they were often performed in the most superficial manner, and there was absolutely no uniformity of standard in the qualification of teachers; and it is perhaps not too much to say that the majority of them were quite inefficient. The municipal councils possessed absolute authority in the selection and appointment of these superintendents, there being no standard of qualification; and the same body fixed their remuneration, and hence the grade of service which they were able to render. The other powers of the municipal council consisted in levying a county assessment to equal the parliamentary grant, and the formation of school sections. To the local trustees were assigned some of the most important functions. They selected and *hired* the teacher, they determined the character and appointments of the schoolroom and the text books to be used, and to

their regulations the teacher was responsible, as the regulations of the provincial authorities were recommendatory and not imperative. One power they lacked: they could establish a school only for those who desired it and were willing to pay, they could not make it a school for all the children. Finally, while model schools were encouraged and established in the older districts at which teachers might learn by example, there was no efficient high class provision for the thorough professional training of teachers.

Such a system among a people the most of whom had grown up without enjoyment of proper school advantages and whose circumstances made the keeping down of expenses one of the most influential considerations of their lives, was certain to produce miserable school houses, haphazard school books and poor teachers, and even these inefficient provisions reached only a part of the population. In the state of New York from which they had been originally borrowed they were already largely modified so as to obviate the chief objections.

For the work of reconstructing this inefficient system and of remedying its great defects, no man was better qualified than Dr. Ryerson. He had himself grown up and had been educated under its influence. He had seen it in its best and in its worst results. He had lived in touch with it all his life, now over forty years. A large part of his life

work had been in the field of education, and he knew the people of the country, their wants and their possibilities as few men knew them. Moreover his careful conservative habit of mind made him a safe as well as a practical and successful reformer of defects. In addressing himself to his task, the comprehensive grasp of his mind, his clear judgment, and keen observation revealed to him at once both the important defects in the existing system and their real causes. He has set these before us very fully in his first and fundamental reports, and with the defects he sets forth the remedies. First of all, properly qualified teachers must be provided, proper school house accommodation and equipment, proper and uniform text books and proper inspection of schools. To secure these with fair uniformity and efficiency they must be more largely controlled or directed from the central provincial department. These important elements were now entirely in the hands of the local authorities, and the result was a body of starved and inefficient schools with here and there a notable exception. To secure the necessary central control and direction without creating fatal antagonism was a task calling for the very highest qualities of the wise statesman, clearly defined ends, good judgment as to ways and means, courage and firmness in administration, and yet sympathy with the difficulties and forbearance with even the prejudices of the people. The success of Dr. Ryerson's effort is the

best proof of the high order of ability which he brought to his work.

As we have seen, before entering upon his work he had devoted a year to the study of the school systems of many lands, but it is evident from the results that he was most deeply impressed by three, those of Prussia, Ireland and Massachusetts. In Prussia he had seen the advantages of strong and wise central direction and authority. In Ireland he had found a promising solution of the religious question in education to which we must presently devote specific attention, and in Massachusetts he had found examples and methods of dealing with many of the problems which arise in the application of a central administrative system to a free people in this western world. But while learning from all these, his mind was too independent and original to borrow any one of them or use it as a model. His strong conservative instinct led him to build upon historic foundations and to use the materials which had grown up ready to his hand. His work was not to sweep these away but to mould them to his great ends. He found a central superintendency and a board of education; he increased the power and extended the functions of these until they were sufficient for his purposes. He found a local superintendency; he brought it under proper control and responsibility, made it a profession in the work of education, occupying the entire time and gifts of qualified men who should make this their only and

lifelong calling. He found the municipal councils taking part in the work, and he skilfully encouraged as well as directed their co-operation in the task without depriving them of a single function which they had previously exercised, and, as in a few years the municipal system was perfected in form, he adapted its educational functions to the more perfect municipal institutions. He found as the fundamental element of the whole system boards of school trustees elected according to immemorial Saxon custom by the assembly of the people. These too he adopted, and without seeming to deprive them of any of their accustomed functions, he first of all gave them experience and continuity of life as a body corporate by making each member hold office for three years, while the continuous interest was maintained by the annual election of one new member of the board, and by the annual discussion of all school matters at the school meeting of all the ratepayers. While skilfully stimulating their ambition to have a good school through the inspectors' reports and free publication of results and honourable mention whenever possible or deserved, and by insisting on at least a minimum of efficiency, he secured them from personal liability by making them a corporate body of trustees, so that the whole people whom they represented, and not the mere patrons of the school were liable for their lawful action; and at the same time he gave them such power to levy school

rates as well as fees as should secure adequate support. As an offset to the limited financial views of local authorities, he made the parliamentary grant a stimulus to larger liberality, helping those who helped themselves, and making the minimum of efficiency an indispensable condition to sharing in the public grants.

The Common School Act of 1846 seemed then to be but an amendment here and there, somewhat thorough it is true, but still no more than an amendment of that of 1843. But in reality it was inspired by a new principle of life. The old system dealt out a legislative grant and left the individual schools very much to care for themselves, scarcely securing even a complete return of the number and attendance at the schools. The new system directed the whole educational force of the country into a combined, wise, scientific effort for the proper education of every child of the land, and held every officer of the system to proper responsibility both to the people and to the central government. On no point was Dr. Ryerson more careful than to make it appear that his system was in thorough harmony with the principles of responsible government. At the one end of the system he maintained the most thorough responsibility to parliament through report of the entire work of the department as a branch of the civil service. At the other end he brought the local trustees of each school section under responsibility to the local meeting of ratepayers,

as well as the local superintendents to the municipal authorities. The new political principle was that, under this universal responsibility, there was instituted all along the line a strong executive. Every officer from the chief superintendent to the local trustee was invested with power, and held responsible for its exercise, both to the people and their representatives, and also to the higher executive authorities. But on the other hand the enforcement of responsibility or of penalty for neglect was in no case matter of individual judgment. The delinquent could be displaced only by the authority by which he was appointed, or punished by regular process of law. There was no room for individual caprice.

It is thus evident that Dr. Ryerson very fairly claimed that his system was based throughout on the principles of responsible government; at the same time it is equally certain that it was animated by the idea of a thoroughly effective government. To this efficiency his own strong convictions, clear judgment and masterful character were largely contributory. Separated as he was by at least one remove from the changing forces of popular political life, he felt himself, like the men who have with so remarkable a record presided in our courts of justice, shielded from those transient and changeful currents of popular influence which must be felt by the ordinary minister of the crown. The latter can assert his manhood and his convictions only by

holding office loosely, as a thing which he will at any time resign rather than compromise his principles. Dr. Ryerson held that the dignity and importance of the work in which he was engaged demanded, as in the administration of justice, absolute independence of action and position. He felt that this work was a sacred calling to be directed by fundamental principles, and not by considerations of temporary expediency, as expressed by the changes of popular opinion, and that it demanded, by its very nature, stability and permanency of method as well as of ideal.

Two principles which he adopted from the outset as the very basis of his system were destined to give rise to no little difficulty in the future. One was that religion and morality are essential elements in all education. We have already seen how steadily he held by this principle in the discussion of the university question, and we shall presently see how large and difficult were the problems to which it gave rise in the field of elementary schools.

The other was that the state provision of education should be comprehensive, bringing its advantages as a matter of equal rights to every child irrespective of creed, wealth, or class. We have seen that these two principles were to him matters of sacred conviction and essential justice at every period of his career. They appear in every controversy in which he took part, and always ranked with him as higher and more imperative than even

the very important political maxim of the complete independence of church and state.

Before entering on the special study of the free school question and the separate school question as they appear in the work of Dr. Ryerson, we must devote a little space to another important aspect of his system as he introduced it from the beginning, viz., the normal school as a provision for the training of teachers. Up to the time of Dr. Ryerson's taking office the only provision in this direction was the model school in each district. These were merely better schools, they made no provision for either practical or theoretical training in the art of teaching. As usual, in this work he started from a sound fundamental principle, to create a fountain-head of good teaching and well-trained teachers and wait till its streams flowed forth to enrich the whole land. His report on a normal school followed close upon his report on a system of common schools, and a year later he succeeded in his task of founding the Toronto Normal school.

His wisdom in this foundation was in no way more conspicuous than in the choice of the principal and first masters of the school. Thomas Jaffray Robertson, M.A., was a man whose power over students has seldom been equalled. In remote parts of the country long years after they had left the "Normal," we have met with students still under the spell of his power. His original methods of teaching reappeared in every county in Ontario and

passed down to the second and third generations of teachers. Henry Youle Hind, M.A., the distinguished scientist, was afterward to win fame in a wider field. The Rev. William Ormiston, M.A., was another of the mighty men of his choice in that early day, followed by J. H. Sangster, M.A., M.D., another strong man. Dr. Ryerson was preëminently a believer that the power to educate lay in the mental and moral power of the teacher and not in his mere technical learning, and in the choice of such men he laid one of the very strongest foundations of his new system.

No large part of the instruction of the normal school in those days was devoted to theories of education, or to what is known as "scientific pedagogics." Lectures were given on the management and organization of a school, and perhaps on the history of education, but the strength of the school lay in thorough mastery of the subjects to be subsequently taught, in the example and influence of master teachers, and the criticism of the practical efforts of the normal students by experienced teachers in the model school. But though the method might to-day be considered empirical, the results in a very few years raised the standard of teaching in every part of the province, and provided able teachers for all the centres of population, as well as many of the better rural schools, and also furnished an experienced and efficient class of men to act as local inspectors.

SUMMARY OF THE SYSTEM

The system thus introduced by Dr. Ryerson in 1846, and much more completely by the act of 1850 which has really been the foundation of all subsequent school legislation, was by no means completed at one stroke. Apart from the great questions of free schools, separate schools, and grammar or high schools which have in some sense a distinct history of their own, experience suggested many minor improvements and adaptations to the growing development of the country and the rising standard of intellectual life which was the result of the successful work of the school systems. But the fundamental principles and even machinery were adopted from the very outset, and were so wisely chosen that each subsequent change seemed only natural historic growth. The following summary may represent the main elements of the system as introduced between 1846 and 1850, the principles of which we have already discussed:

1. It was brought into operation in every school section in the province by an annual meeting of the freeholders and householders of the section. At this meeting school matters were reported and discussed, a trustee board formed or filled for the ensuing year, and the manner of raising school monies for the next year determined, whether by fees, by taxation, or both.

2. The trustee board thus formed was made a body corporate, responsible for and holding all school property for the section, and with full

powers to provide school room, teachers and equipment, and to appoint a secretary-treasurer and a collector, or to apply to the township or municipality for the collection of all such school rates as were raised by general taxation of all taxable property in the section. They were required to see that the school was conducted according to law, that uniform and authorized text books were used, and to make a full annual report according to legal form to the local superintendent, which report was also read at the annual school meeting, the report to shew the time the school was kept open, the money expended and how raised, the number of children in the section and the number attending school, the branches of education taught and the visits of inspection, examinations and other special exercises connected with the school during the year, thus bringing the whole work of the school for the year under review.

3. It made full provision for the proper qualification of teachers, and made them accountable for their duties in the school to the trustees and to the local superintendent of schools. The qualification of teachers was secured through a county board of education consisting of the grammar school trustees and the local superintendent or superintendents of schools for the county.

4. It made it the duty of municipal councils in the townships and in cities, towns and incorporated villages, to levy assessments as desired by the

trustees, or to authorize loans for the purchase or erection of school buildings, to form proper school sections, and to report all acts of the council affecting the schools to the local superintendent.

5. It made it the duty of the county municipal council to appoint the local superintendents and the grammar school trustees, who formed the county board of education, and to levy, by a county school rate, a sum at least equal to the share of the parliamentary school grant allotted to the county. The provision of public libraries was also placed in the hands of the municipal council of the county and the county board of education.

6. It made full provision for the appointment, support and duties of the local superintendents of schools. It not only provided for thorough inspection of schools, but it placed in the hands of the inspectors power to enforce the observance of the law by giving them authority to distribute the school grant under conditions of the fulfilment of all legal requirements, and also power to act as arbitrators in case of dispute on school matters, subject to appeal to the chief superintendent. It gave also the power to cancel or suspend teachers' certificates for neglect of duty, or inefficiency in its discharge or breach of law. The local superintendents thus became the executive officers through whom the most important provisions of the law were enforced. A local visitorial power was also placed in the hands of clergymen, judges, members

of parliament, magistrates, and municipal councillors, by which a local interest and confidence in the schools might be created in the minds of the people.

7. At the centre of this system, with adequate powers to secure energy and efficiency in its entire working, was placed the chief superintendent of schools, and the council of public instruction. The chief superintendent was invested with duties and powers for the province corresponding to those of the local superintendents in their district. They were required to report to him, and the final executive administration of the whole system was under his supervision, with power to direct and enforce its efficient operation, and with judicial powers either on reference or appeal. His direct power of enforcement lay in the administration of the legislative grant. The law must be observed, or the warrant for the money was not issued. His power of direction lay in the preparation of the forms and regulations through which the provisions of the law were to be observed.

Matters of more obvious legislation, such as the authorization of text books, rules for the government and discipline of schools, and the entire responsibility and direction of the normal school were wisely placed in the hands of the council of public instruction, who also prescribed the classification, qualification, and subjects of examination of teachers.

The simplicity, unity, and efficiency of this system are its highest praise. It was built upon no theory of education. It involved no complicated machinery. It was not unduly centralized. It involved the intelligent coöperation of the people of the whole country, and of all the bodies responsible for executive government and legislation. It thus made the schools at once the schools of the people, of the counties and of the province, almost compelling an interest in them at every point. But beyond all this, its grand success—for its success every one must acknowledge—depended in no small measure upon the energy, the wisdom, the administrative ability and the tireless industry of the grand personality who stood at its head as chief superintendent. Devoting his magnificent abilities to this one work, turned aside from it by no complications of the political, the ecclesiastical, or the commercial world, he put the energy of his life into it, and that energy was felt throughout the entire system. But even his work could not have been so complete apart from the coöperation of a younger man who mastered all details, compiled all reports, and generalized all particulars, and kept before the eye of his chief the entire working of the system. J. George Hodgins was the indispensable complement of Dr. Ryerson, and no one knew or appreciated this more than the doctor himself.

A system introducing forces and principles so decidedly new in Canadian educational life was not

to be launched without strong opposition. Perhaps its most disturbing characteristic was the fact that in almost all its features it touched the pockets of the people who had never before regarded education as a matter in which they had any special concern, and also of the people who desired education, but at as cheap a rate as possible. It demanded qualified and efficient teachers, and this called for better salaries; the Gore district council proclaimed throughout the country that old men and cripples, who could do nothing else, and poor immigrants, glad of work at any wage, were quite competent for this work. It demanded uniform text books of better quality, and loyal and British in their teachings; many people thought that the school books were a matter of indifference. It called for school houses properly built, warmed and ventilated, and provided with proper furniture, maps, and other means of teaching; the whole community who were taxed for these purposes rebelled against the expense. It required a moderate outlay for administration and inspection, both general and local; several district councils united in proclaiming this a useless waste of money. All the essential features of the system which contributed directly to improve the character of the schools were thus assailed, nominally as unnecessary, but really on the ground of expense. A people who had grown up themselves under the school bill of 1816 were seemingly utterly without power to appreciate the

need of better things. A few places were noble exceptions to this outburst of ignorant opposition. The municipal council of the Colborne district (Peterborough) was conspicuous in its enlightened support of the new measures, while in the far east municipal authorities refused to recognize or to act under the new law.

The opposition was first encountered in the parliament itself. As the bill was prepared by Dr. Ryerson and introduced by the government, it aimed at bringing education within reach of all the people, poor as well as rich. For this purpose it proposed not at first to make the schools entirely free, but it looked in this direction, and many clauses of the bill making provision for this were eliminated or so modified as to be ineffective. In 1848 a new administration came into power, personally opposed or unfavourable to Dr. Ryerson, and, without consulting him, a new bill was introduced in 1849 making still further changes, crippling the power of administration and inspection. One of the objections of those who were unwilling to appear illiberal in the matter of education was that the system placed too much power in the hands of the central authority; that in fact it was the introduction of a Prussian despotism, with the chief superintendent as absolute monarch. While the new bill copied verbatim all the local provisions of the act of 1846, and thus seemed to maintain the system in the main intact, yet by restoring the old

township superintendents, by making the district board of education an appointment not of the municipal council but of the governor-in-council (and so political), and by limiting the powers of the chief superintendent and council of public instruction, and throwing the text book question back upon local authorities, it took the strength, the unity and the efficiency out of the system, and gave scope once more for that ignorant prejudice and selfish penuriousness which had nullified all previous attempts at educational advancement. The animus of the whole measure was manifest in one of its first clauses, which reduced the moderate salary of £500 assigned to the chief superintendent to £420, a magnificent saving to the country of $320! Mr. Baldwin, fortunately, was too enlightened and high-minded a statesman to descend to pettiness or to be deceived as to the results of such a measure, and although the bill—introduced by an individual member, who lived to see his mistake and make generous amends—was passed through the House, it was, on Mr. Baldwin's advice, disallowed by the governor, and in 1850 Dr. Ryerson was given opportunity in a new school act to advance the system towards his ideal conception.

The act of 1850 was the complete foundation of that school system which Ontario maintains to-day, and which has commanded the admiration of the whole civilized world. The battle for the fundamentals of the system was by no means ended

when the act of 1850 was passed. Other grave questions arose, the history of which is still before us. But with the passage of the act of 1850 the victory was won for the system, and in contending for that victory Dr. Ryerson had exhibited all the characteristics of the true British statesman. He was courageous in the face of opposition, patient and wise in his measures in the midst of difficulty, strong and clearly defined in his convictions and policy, and not afraid to resign at once when by the passage of the bill of 1849 he seemed to be defeated, thus maintaining his manly independence and the strength and truth of his principles. The results have more than justified his course.

Our review of Dr. Ryerson's system of common schools would be incomplete without some reference to two or three important adjuncts of that system, which furnished excellent service at this time, but which are now remembered only by the older people. The first of these was the educational depository. The supply of the new uniform text books to the 200,000 school children of the country offered so obvious a field for commercial enterprise that it might safely be left to the trade, only taking care to protect the public as to price and quality. This was from the beginning the policy both of the council of public instruction and of the chief superintendent. Having obtained permission for the free use of the Irish national series of text books, which they resolved to adopt, these

rights were transferred to responsible dealers who agreed to furnish books of approved workmanship and reasonable price. But other matters requisite for efficient or high-class schools did not as yet offer the same encouragement to commercial enterprise. They were not the things universally necessary and soon worn out by use, and hence in continuous demand in large quantities. Such were philosophical apparatus, illustrative specimens, and advanced books required by teachers, or for school libraries or prizes. All these were at first the luxuries of education, the demand for them was limited, and their use needed encouragement, as leading to the highest perfection in the work of education Such encouragement Dr. Ryerson secured in the form of government assistance to all schools making an effort to secure these higher and more perfect aids in their work. The requisite voucher being presented that the articles required were *bona fide* for the use of the teacher or of the school, they were furnished from the educational depository at half the cost price. The teachers of forty and fifty years ago will remember very distinctly the large assistance afforded in their work and especially in the improvement of their schools or of their own scholarship by those simple, liberal, but thus necessary provisions. A holiday visit to Toronto nearly always resulted in bringing home something which added to the interest and intellectual life of the school. Even the country log

school house often had its case in which were preserved the means of illustrating the zones and the changes of the seasons, and the mysteries of square and cube root; and a few well-selected prize books were indeed light-bearers in the darkness in the days when books were still not abundant.

Associated with this depository was the educational museum, which still survives in its enlarged and modern form. The art critics of to-day will perhaps smile at the copies of the old masters imported from France, Germany and Italy. But in those days they served their purpose, and sowed the seeds of that æsthetic life which to-day is developing a true Canadian art.

Closely associated with the depository was the scheme for the establishment of public school libraries throughout the country. These were not libraries for use in the school, but libraries for the people and attached to the school. The object was to improve the taste and intelligence of the adult population, as well as of the senior scholars. This had been a favourite idea with Dr. Ryerson for many years. When the first suggestion was made to him by Lord Sydenham of undertaking the superintendence and improvement of the public school system, he connected with it in his own mind and in his private letters this wider object. In his opinion no people could exercise the exalted responsibilities of self-government apart from morality and intelligence, and at a time when the

intelligence of the people was far less widely affected by the public press than now, he looked very largely to the public library planted in the public school to give the whole people that higher knowledge which would make them wise, patriotic, broad-minded citizens. Science, too, was then beginning the wonderful and brilliant career of discovery which has been the most remarkable characteristic of the nineteenth century, and her work had not yet grown so technical as to be beyond the power of ordinary intelligence to follow with both profit and interest. The refinement of the public taste by means of poetry and literature was also before his mind. In all these respects he had been deeply interested and impressed by the ideas of Horace Mann, as expressed in his reports and addresses on the school system of Massachusetts. His earlier conceptions on this subject may be illustrated by the following paragraph from the close of his report of 1846:—"The advantages of the school can be but very partially enjoyed unless they are continued and extended by means of books. As the school is the pupil's first teacher, so books are his second; in the former he acquires the elements of knowledge, in the latter he acquires knowledge itself; in the former he converses with the schoolmaster, in the latter he holds intercourse with the greatest and wisest men in all ages, and countries and professions, on all subjects and in every variety of style. But in any community few persons can be

expected to possess the means necessary to procure anything like a general assortment of books—in a new and rural community perhaps none. One library for the whole community is the best substitute. Each one acquires the fruits of the united contributions of all, and the teacher and the poor man with his family participate in the common advantage."

The outcome of these ideas was the provision made in the early school acts for the establishment of township or district circulating libraries. Through the depository a supply of appropriate and judiciously selected books was brought within easy reach. By means of a supplementary legislative grant the effort to secure this boon was substantially aided. By a simple system of sections circulating from school to school, a very considerable library was brought within reach of every school section in the township or county. The care of the books was provided for through the municipal officers, the trustees and the teachers; and many older persons will remember with hearty appreciation the advantages accruing to many municipalities forty years ago from these provisions.

CHAPTER VIII

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM

THE school system established on a firm foundation by the act of 1850, contemplated two main objects, comprehensiveness or universality and efficiency. While there were many obstacles which interfered with the attainment of the latter object, such as the lack of qualified teachers, the lack of proper school buildings and furniture, and the lack of proper text books, the great obstacle to the accomplishment of the first purpose was the matter of expense. Under the act of 1843 the expense of the school fell largely upon the parents of the children attending school, who paid by subscription or rate bill, seldom less than 7s., 6d. a quarter. The result of the system was that in 1845, when Dr. Ryerson began his work, the number of children in the province of school age was estimated by Mr. Hodgins at 198,434, of whom 110,002, or 55 per cent., attended school. This included all who were in attendance during any part of the year, and as the average time during which the school was kept open was $9\frac{2}{3}$ months, when the usual allowance is made for absence it will be seen that the schools, such as they were, were not reaching at any time one half of the children of the country. Dr.

Ryerson's first object was to give the advantages of a good school to every child in the land from five to sixteen years of age. This object attained would certainly mean a high average of intelligence for the whole country. Even eight years of effective schooling out of the eleven years of school age would be a vast advance on the state of things with which he commenced.

His practical knowledge of the country and of the people convinced him at the outset that the remedy lay in free schools and compulsory education. But these two means involved an exercise of executive authority for which the country was by no means prepared. The first school bill introduced by Dr. Ryerson contained provision for the option of free schools by a majority of the ratepayers of the school section. The provision was eliminated by the legislature. The act of 1850 restored this provision, and so opened the question in every school section of the province. Many can still remember the contention which arose through the country over this measure and the profound discussions by political philosophers over the rights of property and the responsibilities of parents. Dr. Ryerson was too wise to propose any arbitrary measure. He secured provision of law by which the people could all in their own time ordain that their own school should be free, and left that provision to work its own way through the influence of enlightened convictions and higher interests. But in

each annual report, as well as in his public addresses, he kept before the minds of the people such principles as these: a free country requires an intelligent people; a common school education is the right of every child in the land; the property which is accumulated by the help of the common industry and intelligence of the people, and protected as well as increased in value by the institutions of the land, is justly chargeable with that which is absolutely necessary for the general welfare of the country, and to enable every man born in the country to discharge the common duties of citizenship for the common good. Slowly, it is true, but still surely these principles made their way, assisted by the fact that the majority of ratepayers, especially in the newer parts of the country, had children of their own to be educated. In 1858, 45 per cent. of the schools were wholly free, and 38 per cent. more partially so, *i.e.*, they charged less than the legal maximum of school fees, while 74 per cent. of the children of school age were now found in the schools. In 1865, no less than 83 per cent. of the schools of the province were entirely free, and nearly 85 per cent. of the school population were in attendance at the schools. It easily and naturally followed that in 1871 all the schools were made free by law. No better illustration could be given of the patient wisdom by which Dr. Ryerson pursued and attained his great ends.

The other aspect of the development of the

school system in the quality and efficiency of the schools involved much more complicated problems and a much more varied history.

The first point in the efficiency of a school is the qualification of the teacher. We have no means of ascertaining the average or even the maximum qualification of the teachers of Upper Canada in 1845. The average salary paid, £29, or $116 a year, indicates a low standard. For the first few years the certificates were issued by the local superintendents, and while the total number of teachers possessing such certificates was nearly equal to that of the schools, no certain opinion can be formed as to the extent of qualification. There was no definite standard of attainments; and the examination of the teacher was entirely personal.

In 1847 the normal school was opened and a standard was prescribed for first and second class provincial certificates of qualification. This was shortly afterwards followed up by the act of 1850 establishing county boards of education with authority to issue first, second and third class certificates of qualification according to a specific programme of examination. In 1857 the results of these measures were apparent in the fact that of nearly 4,000 teachers, 640 possessed first class certificates, over 2,000 second class, and less than 1,000 were teaching on certificates of the lowest class. By this date 734 teachers had already graduated from the normal school in the first or the second class, con-

stituting a considerable percentage of the teachers of that class throughout the province and extending the influence of their professional training throughout the schools of the entire system. County teachers' associations were now very generally established under the advice and influence of the county superintendents, and through the aid of these the influence of the normal school graduates was extended to all grades of teachers, as their methods of teaching were used as examples and illustrations. In the schools conducted by the normal graduates many of the county teachers received their training under what might be termed a Lancasterian system. By this date, through this improvement in the qualification of teachers, there might be found in almost every county in Ontario schools of a grade of efficiency of which any country might be proud. The people who ten years before had rebelled against the expensiveness of the new system and were willing to place the education of their children in the hands of cripples, worn out old men and stranded immigrants, were now becoming jealous of the reputation of their school and quite ambitious to have the very best in the county.

The furnishing of the schools was also rapidly improved. Brick and stone buildings of handsome architectural appearance replaced the old log and frame structures; proper means of heating and ventilation were supplied; maps, blackboards and other apparatus were secured; and above all, the

old benches and high wall desks were superseded by comfortable seats and desks in which the pupils were ranged two and two, facing the teacher and the long platform from which his blackboards and maps were displayed. With these improvements new methods of order and systematic work were introduced, class instruction superseded the individualism of the early days, and an orderly programme, in itself an important element of education, became possible in every school.

At the very outset of his work Dr. Ryerson recognized the possibility of a still higher standard of school work in the towns, cities and even incorporated villages. In 1847, his first bill, making special provision for these centres of population, was introduced. The object from the beginning of these special provisions was the construction of the schools of the city or town into an educational system. The first step in this direction was the appointment of a larger board of trustees who had charge of all the public schools of the municipality, maintained them from a common school fund, and appointed a local superintendent of the whole. From this the steps were easy to a graded school system for the city or town. Primary schools were established for the several sections or wards in which the junior pupils were taught by themselves in schools convenient to their homes, while the elder pupils were massed in a graded central school of more advanced forms, and this at a later period

was sometimes combined with the grammar school, under the designation of a union school. Perhaps the most widely known example of the successful working of this system was to be found in the city of Hamilton under the direction of Mr. A. Macallum, one of the first graduates of the normal school. It was no slight tribute to Dr. Ryerson that in the very district which was the centre of rebellion against his new system in 1847, there should be found the most successful illustration and the most enthusiastic working out of his most advanced ideas of high class public schools.

In the larger city of Toronto the graded school system was worked out on another model. The ward schools were each one a graded school covering the whole field of public school work from the most elementary to the highest form. Here the grammar school work was always kept distinct. In smaller towns and villages, the graded system was introduced as a single central school with several rooms and teachers covering the whole work as in the ward schools of Toronto.

Such were some of the steps by which the school system through the fifties and the sixties was gradually developed to higher perfection. In this process much was left to local enterprise and co-operation. From time to time legislation was introduced which opened the way for improvement. Especially after the perfection of our municipal system, by the act of 1856, the whole school

system was harmonized with the improved forms of municipal government. But the object of these new provisions of the school law was not to force a cast-iron form of schools upon the people, but to provide facilities by which they could themselves work out in their own way and according to local needs and ability the higher models which were thus placed before them. The municipal relations of education were thus very fully developed under Dr. Ryerson's direction. As the school law finally passed from his hands, all common or public schools, whether in townships, incorporated villages, towns or cities, were placed under the control of trustees elected directly by the people and forming a distinct body corporate for the purpose of the school alone. Education was in this way separated, not only from general politics, but also from municipal interests of other kinds. Constituting in itself an interest of the most permanent character, requiring continuity of policy and an income not subject to fluctuations, the independence of the educational work and of the board to which it is committed is a most important principle in the system.

It was a bold policy which ventured to place so much power in the hands of trustees, enabling them to apply to the municipal council for the levying of all monies required for the proper maintenance of the schools. Had such a provision been suggested in 1846, or even in 1850, it would in all probability have been at once rejected. But after

the schools had advanced step by step both in efficiency and popularity, until by the voluntary act of an intelligent people they were made free to all, it was an easy matter to secure assent to a law, which required the municipal councils to collect with the other local taxes, the ways and means for the support of the schools. To transfer the management of the schools even now to the municipal bodies would doubtless result in their rapid deterioration. To give these bodies power to limit the expenditure of the school trustees would tend in the same direction. It is a peculiar feature under any government, that one body should be responsible for raising the funds and another for their expenditure. But the peculiar circumstances and the unusual importance of the interest involved we think fully justify the anomaly, and have commended it to the common sense of the people. The school under Dr. Ryerson's system is not a local but rather a national interest. The child is educated not merely as an inhabitant of a particular locality, but also as a future citizen. The whole country on that basis contributes to the support of every local school. The county school rate is an intermediate link in the same direction. The school trustees are thus not merely the representatives of the local interest. Theirs is like that of members of parliament, a wider responsibility. Their duty is not merely to furnish public services, sidewalks, street lights and so forth, to a locality for the

coming year, but to furnish the country with an intelligent citizenship for a whole generation. Such wider and higher responsibility demands a centralization of power and an independence of action, passing beyond the ordinary limits of municipal government, and justifies the apparent anomaly. Occasionally attempts are made from the municipal side to create dissatisfaction by representing the school trustees as an irresponsible body who load the people with taxes. But the patriotic instinct of the people has protected them against such unworthy suggestions. They are well satisfied, provided they have really good schools, to provide the means for their support, and they do not forget that school trustees as well as municipal councils are directly and finally responsible to the people, and they have manifested no desire to make them, in addition to this, responsible to the municipal council. The collection of the school funds by the officers of the municipality is after all only a matter of economy and convenience. In the nature of the case it cannot imply that the municipal body is responsible either for the amount or for its proper expenditure. To attempt because of this common sense economical provision to bring the educational system completely under municipal control would prove fatal. Education, like the administration of justice to which Dr. Ryerson often compared it, is an interest of the nation, as well as of the locality and the individual. It is one of the glories of the Ontario system that it

has so well preserved the balance of controlling forces, keeping both these important interests so largely out of the field both of local and general politics, and combining both local and central supervision and support.

A second municipal duty in relation to public school education is provision for supervision by the appointment of public school inspectors. These officers constitute one of the most important elements in the system. When Dr. Ryerson began his work, inspection was provided for by township superintendents, but, as we have seen, these officers, except as clerks for the distribution of the school fund, were either in large part incompetent or perfunctory in the discharge of their duty. The superintendency of the schools was not their chief work. The first step was the appointment of county inspectors, whose whole time should be given to this work. A second step was provision for thorough qualification. Professional training, experience in practical teaching, and a high-grade teacher's certificate were successively demanded for this important work. The rapid improvement of the schools was doubtless largely due to this feature of the system. At an early day the best graduates of the normal school were rapidly passed into this commanding office, and through them the influence of the normal school reached every part of their district. In the cities and towns the inspector was appointed by the public school board directly, and became

their executive officer and professional counsel. In no part of the system was the influence of the inspector as an efficient officer more evident than here. With the development of graded schools along the two lines which we have already described, under efficient and able inspectors the organization and perfection of the schools made very rapid and gratifying progress in all the cities, and the larger towns, where the system but slightly differed, by no means fell behind. We have before referred to the cities of Toronto and Hamilton as conspicuous examples of the two methods of grading schools, and as forming city systems, one adapted to a city covering a more extended area, the other to a city where all the older children were within reach of a central school. This latter system, slightly modified, became the type for the larger towns, and in a short time beautiful and commodious central schools, as well as neat, comfortable and conveniently located primary schools, became a prominent feature of our then rising towns, which are now numbered among our cities.

The material and visible improvement in school buildings and architecture was, perhaps, the readiest measure of the improvement in the educational status of the schools. Dr. Ryerson served his province as chief superintendent thirty-three years, the life of a single generation. At the beginning of that time the public school buildings even of Toronto were an eyesore; at the end they were in almost

every town of ambition or consequence the pride of the people and the chief ornament of the place, fitly representing the high character of the intellectual life within. It may be said that all this was the natural result of the growth of the people in wealth and intelligence. True, but it was the result of that growth under a system which called out their enterprise, enlisted their interest, wisely composed their differences and united their energies, and which directed their efforts by placing before them patiently and continuously the best models and methods.

It is not easy to form a true estimate of the personal influence of Dr. Ryerson in this remarkable process of the development of our public school system. We have already noted that at its very foundation he wisely utilized the common forces which move human society in such a way as to make the work grow by its own inner vitality. His work was not so much to force a system upon an unwilling people, as to construct a system so accommodated to the needs, the interests, the habits, and even the selfish motives of the people, that they would readily and naturally adopt it as their own. In a few years its success became to them a matter of honest pride. The intelligence and enterprise of trustees, the ambition of teachers to excel, the patriotic liberality of municipal bodies, the fidelity and ability of inspectors, even the emulation of the school children and the sympathetic

coöperation of the whole people became powerfully enlisted in this work. The schools seemed to grow of themselves. But behind all this there was a wise, sympathetic, unostentatious, but powerful mind at the helm. One secret of his success, as we have already seen, lay in the choice of the ablest young men as his helpers in various departments of the work. Another lay in his unusual skill in avoiding or overcoming difficulties. His interpretation and administration of school law was remarkable in its success, and in this Dr. Hodgins was his right-hand man. But these were a part of the progressive movement of the system; his most important work was always in advance of that movement, the discovery and the devising of new and more perfect things as the country was prepared for them. For this purpose he kept in constant touch with the school work and the men most intelligently interested in it throughout the entire province. He made a special study of the county superintendents' reports. He made periodical tours through the province, calling conventions of trustees, superintendents, municipal officers, teachers, and all persons interested in education, and discussing at length with them the questions which seemed to require advanced legislation. He was at the same time a diligent student of the progress of education in other countries, and for this purpose made extended and repeated visits abroad, to become personally acquainted with the working of new

methods and educational theories. And yet he was least of all things a theorist. His mind was peculiarly practical and conservative, and adopted nothing except under conviction of its utility, and with most intimate knowledge of the conditions of his own people, he moulded all new things to their needs and capacity.

The results of this constant mental activity appear in his annual reports which are admirable digests not only of the progress of the work but also of suggested improvements, which were frequently the precursors of new legislation. As we have already seen, the School Act of 1850 was the broad and fairly complete basis of the whole educational system. Dr. Ryerson was too wise a legislator to render his work nugatory by too frequent or too radical changes. When the act of 1850 was followed up by the supplementary act of 1855 it was merely a step forward. The powers of trustees were more clearly defined and extended, so that the efficiency of the school could not be prevented by legal quibbles or individual obstinacy. The danger that separate schools might be made to destroy the unity and comprehensiveness of the system was guarded against, and provision was made for the extended usefulness of the Journal of Education, for the establishment of the Museum of Art, and for larger legislative aid to the schools. In like manner the amendment act of 1860 secured more perfectly the discharge of the duties of trustees by

enforcing reports, providing for proper audit, insisting that trustees should be properly qualified in the section for which they were elected, and by demanding proper notice of all legal meetings of school trustees. It prohibited trustees from any interest in contracts for school supplies or buildings, gave them power to sell school property, called for definite written agreement between trustees and teacher. It provided a more definite programme for the examination and classification of teachers by the county boards. From these examples it will be seen that the successive acts of legislation proposed by Dr. Ryerson for twenty years after the full establishment of the new system in 1850, involved no important change of the system. They aimed rather at growth and perfection, and at remedy of practical defects, which the working out of the system had revealed.

The second most important period in the history of our common school legislation was ushered in by the act of 1870-71. The subject of education had at confederation been placed in the hands of the provincial legislature, and in this act it for the first time grappled with the problems presented by the common schools, which were now named public schools. The act of 1870-71 was supplemented by that of 1874, and the two together represent Dr. Ryerson's last legislative work on behalf of the schools of Ontario.

Preceding this legislation Dr. Ryerson made his

fourth and final educational tour in Europe and America, and also held his fifth and last series of conventions through the province, discussing the most important features of the new legislation. The legislation itself was also shaped on the basis of our new federal and provincial constitution, and thus may be considered as the beginning of what may be regarded as a reconstruction of the school system. It is a fact noted by Dr. Hodgins that a principal objection to this proposed legislation was the fear of the people that the system of 1850 would be materially changed. The system which in 1848-9 had excited such violent opposition as an introduction of Prussian despotism was in 1870 so prized and had so completely commended itself to the judgment and affections of the people, that they looked with jealousy upon any proposal for change. Commended abroad as one of the best, if not the best in the world, and the ground of honest pride at home, it was now being carefully shielded by the very people who once regarded it as a foreign intrusion.

But when we come to examine in detail the changes of 1870-71 we find that they were not radical. They did not in any way disturb the established method of working with which the people had now become familiar and which had been productive of such excellent results. They perfected the free school system, and introduced a carefully guarded and most moderate form of compulsion.

To the schools under this new extension of public interest was given the designation, not of "common" schools, as open to all, but of "public" schools, as belonging to and used by all the people. The principle of compulsory attendance at school for at least four months in each year was the most radical change introduced. This Ryerson had made the subject of most careful study both in Europe and America, and it was only when fully convinced of its necessity by such study, and with the example before him of its success in several states of the Union, as well as in several countries of Europe, that he ventured upon its introduction. Even then he guarded scrupulously against any undue pressure upon the poor. The trustees and magistrates by whom the law was to be enforced were given wide power of discretion, and the term made compulsory was but four months in the year, as against six months required in Massachusetts.

A very important part of the legislation of 1870-71 was the effort to render uniform and to improve the standard of qualification of teachers. For this purpose the examination for teachers seeking first class certificates was placed in the hands of the council of public instruction, and such certificates became provincial. The county boards were also improved, being composed with the inspector of two persons who themselves held certificates of qualification for that purpose from the council of public instruction. Provision was also made that

certificates should be given to inspectors, the condition being a university degree or the highest grade of provincial certificate, experience in teaching, and proof by written thesis of mastery of the fundamental principles of the science of education.

In this effort to elevate the standard of qualification in the interest of the schools, the interests of the teachers were never forgotten. It is true their ranks were thinned by the elimination of incompetent or unqualified persons, but at the same time every effort was made to render their position and work such as might be desired as a permanent calling or profession in life. The period of service of even one third of the early normal school graduates was three and a half years on the average. Every year scores of the best teachers after a short term of service entered the Christian ministry, or law or medicine, often attaining the highest eminence in these professions. But others left the teaching profession, not for a wider or more ambitious sphere of usefulness, but from pecuniary and family considerations alone. As teachers they were not secure of a permanent position, and a home and status in the community. Teachers were still frequently changed at the end of a year, and the average length of service was scarcely three years. Few schools made provision for a residence for the teacher, and in a large number of the country schools the teacher must of necessity be an unmarried man or woman. Many of these final provisions devised by Dr.

Ryerson aimed at the remedy or at least alleviation of these evils, by making the work of the teacher a profession, by providing him a home in connection with the school, by improving the scale of remuneration, and by making provision for a retiring allowance for teachers who had given their life to the service. The evil of frequent change of teachers and of the employment of young and inexperienced teachers was easily seen; but the causes lay deeper perhaps than the reach of any legislative enactment. In any case they could be removed only by a long and patient policy in which the government and the people would unite in continuous effort to make the position and work of the teacher as desirable as those of any other profession. Dr. Ryerson's work was now too near its close to permit of his accomplishing so desirable a result.

The introduction of compulsory education brought to the front the problem of the neglected and unfortunate classes of our population. The recognition of the principle that the education of all the children was the duty of the state, made more prominent the condition of the street arabs of our cities, of the children of criminal and inebriate parents, and of those who come into the world deprived of sight, or speech, or ordinary mental powers. These problems were also the subject of Dr. Ryerson's latest studies and reports and were matters left, as he retired from his life work in the seventy-fourth year of his age, to be wrought out

by his successors. But before he passed from his office at least legislative provision was made for the better care of all these classes of the population.

The later years of Dr. Ryerson's work were not without their prophecy of several minor though still important changes in his school system. The date was the time of the high tide of the *laisser faire* system both in England and Canada. The doctrine that the needs of the country should be supplied by private enterprise as far as possible without legislative interference was just then popular. The government ownership and control of all public franchises, or the communistic supply of common needs was then looked upon as a dream of wild theorists. And yet the very idea of an educational system is paternal; and the system built up by Dr. Ryerson was certainly such. It was in its very nature the undertaking by the government, whether provincial, municipal or local, of the supply of one of the most universal needs of the people. To-day we think it quite reasonable to consider and even vote upon the public supply of light, of transportation, and of telegraphic as well as postal communication. The justification of all these projects is the well-being of the whole people. This certainly was the justification of the paternalism involved in Dr. Ryerson's system. It had worked well for the people. The children were being educated as never before. Illiteracy was disappearing from the land, and the standard of intelligence was being advanced

beyond all precedent in all classes of society. No one could venture to criticize a system marked by such success as a whole.

The cry of Prussian despotism had quite disappeared, but against some of its features the cry was raised of interference with the interests of trade. The educational depository was the ground of objection. It had in its day accomplished a most important and excellent work. It had placed nearly two hundred thousand volumes, not of inferior fiction, but of high class science, history, travel and literature in public libraries throughout the country, and it had furnished the schools of the country with an equipment of school apparatus which would have been beyond their reach otherwise for years to come. It had accomplished this work without other expense to the country than the legislative grants in aid which were wholly employed in supplementing the money raised by the schools and in thus furnishing them with apparatus at one half the cost price. The depository had thus served the three-fold purpose of bringing into the country the best school apparatus, of furnishing it at cost price, and of distributing the grant in aid of the purchase of such outfit on the basis of local contribution. The attack on this section of the education department, and the personal form which it assumed, was a matter upon which one can now look back only with pain and shame. It was poor requital to the man who had done so much for his country, and

the so-called principles upon which it was grounded will scarcely bear critical examination in the light of history. But at the time it carried with it a large section of the public, and under its influence the depository came to an end. It can be said now, with no little confidence, that the depository was in its day at least, one of the most important contributory means to the success of Dr. Ryerson's work. Fortunately for the country it was not destroyed until the need which it supplied was so manifest that other means could be used to do its work. Private enterprise would have failed completely in that work at an earlier date, and even now it succeeds in some measure only by the help of legislative enactment. What Dr. Ryerson tempted the schools to do as a benefit to their children, we now command them to do under pain of loss of the legislative grant.

Another and much more important change in the central education department Dr. Ryerson himself anticipated, and proposed almost immediately after the introduction of the federal system of government into Canada. This was the creation for the province of a minister of education as a member of the executive council of the province, placing the department on the same footing as then were the public works, the crown lands, and the executive administration of law. There was no little hesitation on this point on the part of leading statesmen. Dr. Ryerson urged the supreme importance

of the work involved, the need of direct and authoritative representation of that work on the floor of the legislature, and in the executive council. He proposed that the educational system should be unified from the provincial university to the elementary school under the control of a minister of the crown, as a most important department of the provincial government. For this purpose he voluntarily placed his resignation in the hands of the lieutenant-governor.

The hesitancy of the government and of the public mind to accede to this change arose from a consideration of the danger of the intervention of party politics in so important and national an interest. Here, if anywhere, the interests of the public service should not be subordinated to, or even for a moment endangered by the unfortunate tendency to reward political adherents by appointments in the public service. Dr. Ryerson himself acknowledged the difficulty and continued in office for several years after making this proposition. Immediately on his retirement in 1876, the proposal was carried into effect, and has powerfully influenced the history of education in Ontario for the last twenty-five years. During that time the political danger has not appeared to be so important. The appointing power is so diffused among municipal and local bodies that there has scarcely been room for criticism even by the most suspicious; and the few appointments at the central office have

been very judiciously made. Dr. Ryerson's idea of greater facility and effectiveness in the presentation of educational interests to the legislature has been fully sustained by the results in the hands of able ministers of education. Perhaps the one weakness of the new system was scarcely anticipated at the time. The minister of education, under the pressure of the general work of government, and of the demands made upon a political leader, must depend to no small degree upon subordinates, and he himself is liable at any time to step out of office. There can scarcely be thus the same conservative unity and continuity of policy and the same careful development of great principles which were such conspicuous features of Dr. Ryerson's administration. Perhaps we could not have secured them under any other man as chief superintendent.

CHAPTER IX

THE SEPARATE SCHOOL QUESTION

AT the date of the founding of our Upper Canadian school system all parties were agreed that religion and morality should form an essential part of the education of the young. Puritans and Presbyterians, Anglicans and Roman Catholics, stood firmly by this principle as a matter of conviction as well as of traditional usage, and Methodists were no exception to the consensus. They had shewn their faith by their works in the building of their college. When, therefore, Dr. Ryerson addressed himself to his important task, he did so upon the basis of this principle, believing that he had behind him the support of almost unanimous conviction on the subject; and he took especial pains to make provision for the recognition of religion in the schools, and for the instruction of the children in the fundamental principles of religion and morality. This provision was made in three ways—first the trustees were given power for the regulation of religious teaching and exercises in the schools in harmony with the desires of the parents; again all clergymen were made visitors of the schools with the right to instruct the children of their communion by themselves for an hour each week; and

in addition the text books selected for the schools were made to embody a very considerable amount of religious and scriptural knowledge, without involving any dogmas called in question among the religious bodies. As a result of these provisions it is a well-remembered fact that at least in the rural schools religious influence and instruction were fairly well maintained. In the year 1859, with 3,665 schools, 4,360 visits were made by clergymen; in 2,510 schools the scriptures were read daily, and 1,708 schools were opened and closed with prayer. In all the schools the text books used contained the moral and religious lessons referred to. In the last report issued by Dr. Ryerson, of 4,758 schools reported, 4,033 were opened and closed with prayer, and the ten commandments were taught in 3,167. On these facts Dr. Ryerson in his report makes the following remarks:—"The religious instruction, reading, and exercises, are, like religion itself, a voluntary matter with trustees, teachers, parents, and guardians. The council of public instruction provides facilities, even forms of prayer, and makes recommendations on the subject, but does not assume authority to enforce or compel compliance with those provisions or recommendations. As Christian principles and morals are the foundation of all that is most noble in man, and the great fulcrum and lever of public freedom and prosperity in a country, it is gratifying to see general and avowed recognition of them in public schools."

While Dr. Ryerson with his strong personal influence continued at the head of the school system, these general provisions exerted a distinct moral and religious influence on the schools, but they were by no means a complete solution of the educational and political questions involved. To one class of the people the religious instruction thus given appeared altogether inadequate. They would be satisfied with nothing short of full instruction in the doctrines and usages of their own church; and they were not satisfied to confine this extended religious instruction to the Sunday school or catechumen class, or to a weekly hour in the public school under the direction of the clergyman. Another tendency due to the growth of the modern spirit which would completely separate the work of the church from the political sphere is thus referred to by Dr. Ryerson in his last report:—"There are many religious persons who think the day school, like the farm fields, the place for secular work, the religious exercises of the workers being performed in the one case as in the other in the household and not in the field of labour." This class of the people would, of course, find the solution of the problem in a strictly secular government school for all classes of the population.

The first of these two classes had, as early as 1841 (*i.e.*, when the first attempt at a general system of public schools was made, three years before Dr. Ryerson's appointment, and five years

before the introduction of his first Common School Act,) already secured for themselves the concession of separate schools. They were thus in possession of a vested right; and of this the act of 1846 did not attempt to deprive them. The act of 1849, which failed to come into effect, dropped the provision and would apparently have resulted in purely secular schools, and this formed one of Mr. Ryerson's most serious objections to it. From the very outset of Mr. Ryerson's carefully conceived plan of schools on a moral and religious basis which might be accepted by all the members of a Christian community, it was thus exposed to two antagonistic influences which were at the same time directly and irreconcilably in conflict with each other. The separate school party were anxious to strengthen and extend their position, and the other party were anxious to extinguish the separate schools by the general enforcement of a purely secular system. Dr. Ryerson desired to secure the maintenance of the general moral and Christian aspect of the common schools, making them free from any valid objection on the ground of sectarian teaching, with at the same time such supervision of the separate schools as would secure their efficiency, and prevent their being forced upon any person without his free consent or desire. The common schools were to be maintained in their true position as the schools of all the people.

The active conflict of these opposing parties may

be said to date from 1852. Up to that date the number of separate schools established had been fifty, of which thirty-two had been discontinued in the last three years. Of the remaining eighteen, three were Protestant, two being in sections where the majority of the population was French, and two were schools for coloured children in Kent and Essex, leaving only thirteen Roman Catholic separate schools in operation at the close of 1852. No better proof could be afforded of the success of the fair and conciliatory policy of Dr. Ryerson. Up to the time of his death, Bishop Power acted as chairman of the council of public instruction and was a most valued member of the board, and by his presence, counsel, and general attitude, contributed not a little to make the common school system acceptable to the Roman Catholic population. During the first three years of his administration the attitude of Bishop Charbonnel was at least not antagonistic, and the aggressive position assumed in 1852 was, to the friends of a common school system, a surprise.

But on looking back, a circumstance connected with the passing of the School Act of 1850 seems to indicate that the new bishop, while seemingly acquiescent, was at heart anxious for thoroughly Roman Catholic schools. The bill of 1849 had disturbed the confidence created under the policy of Dr. Ryerson, and gave occasion for a movement on the part of those desirous of denominational

schools. In this the high church party of the Anglicans and the Roman Catholics united their forces. Dr. Ryerson's bill as introduced proposed to place the power of establishing separate schools in the hands of the board of trustees, instead of making it possible for ten householders to demand a separate school. To this the separate school party proposed an amendment, making it possible for any ten householders, either Catholic or Anglican, to demand a denominational school without restriction. The acts of 1843 and 1846 had restricted this power to cases when the teacher was a Protestant in a Protestant community, or a Catholic in a district mainly Catholic, and so made no provision for the subdivision of Protestantism and the establishment of Protestant denominational schools. By means of strong influence brought to bear on the members, this amendment was on the verge of passing when Dr. Ryerson fell back on a slight modification of the provisions of 1843 and 1846, which satisfied the Roman Catholics and broke up the combination, and so prevented a most serious inroad upon the principle of common schools. But shortly after this difficulty had passed another circumstance brought the question again to the front. The city of Toronto was under the new act but a single school section divided for municipal and other purposes into wards, in each of which there was a graded common school. The trustees, who were decidedly opposed to the separate schools,

refused to grant more than a single separate school under the provisions of the act, and the courts sustained them in the refusal. Dr. Ryerson used his influence to secure more favourable consideration for the Roman Catholics, but without avail. It was certainly within the power of the trustees to grant such consideration, as the law specified "one or more," but equally within their right, as interpreted by the court, to grant but the one, and upon that right they took their stand. This led to the demand for an amendment to the act, giving room for a more aggressive separate school policy. This Dr. Ryerson refused, but provided an amendment in 1851 which conferred the right of a separate school on each ward or union of wards for that purpose. During this period also, and for several years following, the advocates of the bill of 1849 kept the question alive by a constant effort to eliminate from the common school act all provision for or concession of the right of separate schools. Dr. Ryerson consistently opposed this policy, believing that such a concession constituted a means of rendering the great body of the Roman Catholic inhabitants satisfied with the provisions of the law, and thus secured a more general acceptance of the common school system than would be otherwise possible. While Dr. Ryerson's policy, as we have seen, was, down to 1852, largely successful, the agitation against separate schools and the other circumstances referred to kept alive an opposing

force which suddenly became active in 1852. By his fair consideration of the claims of the Roman Catholics in the Toronto separate school case in 1850-1, as well as by his consistent opposition to all attempts to deprive them of the rights already conceded by law, Dr. Ryerson had gained the ill-will of the radical party who wished to abolish all separate schools at once. He was now doomed to encounter almost equal difficulty from the ultra separate school party.

The initial point of the agitation was furnished by the growing establishment of free schools. These schools were supported entirely by their apportionment of the school fund, made up of legislative grant and county school tax, in which the separate school shared *pro rata*, and supplemented by a municipal tax upon all the property of the school section. In this last tax the Roman Catholics now demanded that the separate schools should also share *pro rata* of their average attendance. The case was brought up on appeal from the towns of Belleville and Chatham, in which Dr. Ryerson sustained the trustees in refusing to the separate schools a share in the second part of their school revenue. This led to the preparation by the Roman Catholic authorities of a bill which they were determined to press through parliament, and which, in the opinion of Sir Francis Hincks, would be a serious blow to the common school system and to free schools. To meet this emergency the Sup-

plemental Act of 1853 was prepared by Dr. Ryerson and passed through parliament. The opportunity afforded by the passage of this act was embraced to define and improve many of the general provisions of the act of 1850, but in regard to separate schools its essential feature was the exemption from the local or municipal school tax of all who were contributing supporters of a separate school. In making this equitable concession to the supporters of the separate school, care was taken to guard the rights of the common schools by provisions which Dr. Ryerson summarizes as follows:—

1. No separate school can be established or continued otherwise than on the conditions and under the circumstances specified in the nineteenth section of the School Act of 1850.

2. No part of the municipal assessment can be applied, and no municipal authority or officer can be employed to collect rates for the support of any separate school.

3. If any persons, whether Roman Catholic or Protestant, demand a separate school in the circumstances in which it may be allowed, they must tax themselves for its support, and they must make returns of the sums they raise and of the children they teach.

4. Separate schools are subject to the same inspection and visits as common schools.

5. All ground and semblance of complaint of injustice is taken away from the supporters of a

separate school, while they no longer employ municipal authority and municipal assessments for sustaining their school.

6. The supporters of separate schools cannot interfere in the affairs of the public schools.

The new act was thus a fresh proof of Dr. Ryerson's consistent support of the fundamental principle of a common school system, and of the separation of the state from entanglement with any church.

By this date the separate school question had aroused an intensely violent discussion and political contention on the part of two extreme parties. We have already seen that a party, led in the House of Parliament by Messrs. W. L. Mackenzie, George Brown and Malcolm Cameron, and joined by a very few of the extreme opposite political faith, maintained a most active crusade against separate schools, whether maintained as a matter of principle or as a compromise. With these Dr. Ryerson agreed in principle but not in policy. Of both his principle and policy he made the most open avowal, saying in an official letter to Bishop Charbonnel (afterwards published):—"I always thought the introduction of any provision for separate schools in a popular system of common education like that of Upper Canada was to be regretted and inexpedient; but finding such a provision in existence, and that parties concerned attached great importance to it, I have advocated its continuance, leaving separate schools to die out not by force of legislative enact-

ment, but under the influence of increasingly enlightened and enlarged views of Christian relations, rights, and duties between different classes of the community. I have at all times endeavoured to secure to parties desiring separate schools, all the facilities which the law provides, though I believe the legal provision for separate schools has been and is seriously injurious rather than beneficial to the Roman Catholic portion of the community, as I know very many intelligent members of that church believe as well as myself." As this calm statement was written in reply to a letter from the Bishop inveighing in very forcible language against the whole system of common schools, there can be no question that it candidly and clearly expresses Dr. Ryerson's position and policy.

The leader in the opposition to this policy was Mr. Brown, then influential in parliament and throughout the province as the editor and proprietor of *The Globe*. Mr. Brown's policy, in which he was supported not only by a large section of Liberals but also by a section of the Orange body, was the radical one of no separate schools. His contention is fully expressed by the following quotation given by Dr. Hodgins from *The Globe*. Addressing Dr. Ryerson, he says: "And did this third concession to the claimants of separate schools satisfy them? Was your oft-repeated assurance realized that 'the existence of the provision for separate schools' in the national system prevented

'oppositions and combinations which would otherwise be formed against it?' On the contrary the separatists only advanced in the extent of their demands, and became more resolute in enforcing them. The very next year the matter was again brought to a crisis, a general election came on, Bishop Charbonnel pressed his demands, and Mr. Hincks consented to bring in yet another sectarian school act." The position of the Bishop will fully appear from another extract from a letter written by him to Dr. Ryerson in March, 1852:— "Therefore, since your school system is the ruin of religion, and persecution of the church; since we know, at least as well as anybody else, how to encourage, diffuse, promote education, and better than you how to teach respect toward authority, God, and His church, parents and government; since we are under the blessed principles of religious liberty and equal civil rights, we must have and we will have, the full management of our schools, as well as Protestants in Lower Canada; or the world of the nineteenth century will know that here as elsewhere, Catholics, against the constitution of the country, against its best and most sacred interests, are persecuted by the most cruel, hypocritical persecution."

No analysis or description of the case could more clearly present the situation than do these three extracts. Each of the extremists stands on his ideal principle and is ready to carry it in practice to its

logical conclusion regardless of the convictions of his opponent and of all collateral interests; Dr. Ryerson stands in a *via media*, striving to reconcile their conflicting ideas of right and truth and to harmonize both with other equally important interests of religion and patriotism, only to find himself the object of bitter invective from both. Dr. Ryerson's letters at this period rank again amongst the best work of his life as an exposition of the principles ethical, political and religious, which should govern in a mixed community of varying religious convictions, in matters in which, as citizens, they are called upon to coöperate with each other. We cannot, of course, claim that in the enunciation of these principles there does not appear at times some evidence of a strong and fiery spirit. It is scarcely given to a great soul pursuing with single purpose a great object of life, not at times to be roused to ire when needless difficulties are thrown across his pathway by men of alien ideas and spirit. Hence we must not be surprised if at times his words are almost as strong as those of Mr. Brown or Bishop Charbonnel. But the *via media* for which he contended throughout was respect to conscientious convictions on both sides and patient waiting for that unity of thought which truth is sure to bring in the long run. But for many years the conflict of parties made the *via media* a very thorny path to the chief superintendent of education.

Returning from the field of controversy to that of legislative and political action, we scarcely find the supplemental act of 1853 in operation before the occasion arises for further agitation and new demands. There can be no doubt that the underlying cause of the new agitation was a clearly defined and persistent policy on the part of the Bishop to separate the entire body of Catholic children from the common schools and place the management of their education under the control of the church. To this policy Dr. Ryerson was, as we have seen, strenuously and inflexibly opposed. But as the Bishop was careful to wait for a reasonable occasion or favourable opportunity for each forward step in his policy, Dr. Ryerson was equally careful in his opposition not to contravene any principle of equity or fairness.

The occasion for the new agitation again arose in Toronto, where the extreme party opposed to separate schools was strong and quite ready for heroic measures. In St. David's ward one Roman Catholic teacher was employed in a school of six teachers, and on this ground the application of the Roman Catholics for a separate school was refused. This refusal Dr. Ryerson pronounced contrary to law. In the next year, by error, some supporters of the separate schools were included in the common school taxation and a refund of the amount so paid was refused on the ground that the proper returns of names had not been made by the separate school

trustees. These circumstances were made the foundation of the following complaints by Bishop Charbonnel:—

1. That the supporters of separate schools were unjustly required to pay amounts equal to those required for common schools in order to secure exemption from the common school taxation, and that for the same purpose the trustees were required to make returns not required of common school trustees.

2. That the trustees of the several wards of a city or town could not act together as one board as could the trustees of the common schools.

3. That the government grant was distributed by the city or town board, or in the townships by the local superintendent, a provision which did not secure impartiality. It does not appear that any instance of partiality was cited.

To remedy these complaints Dr. Ryerson added to a short grammar and common school bill of 1854 three clauses touching separate schools proposing: (1) To relieve the supporters of separate schools of the defined rate at which they must be taxed and also the trustees of the obnoxious returns; (2) To enable the trustees to unite as one board in towns and cities; (3) To place the distribution of the legislative grant in the hands of the chief superintendent of education. These provisions Dr. Ryerson calls his ultimatum of legislation on separate schools, but as they were not

accepted they appear to have been withdrawn from the bill.

Early in the following year the Roman Catholic Bishops of Toronto, Bytown and Kingston prepared a comparative table of the Upper and Lower Canada school laws and a draft of a separate school bill setting forth their terms. This bill proposed to repeal all previous provisions for separate schools; to empower any number of dissidents of any profession to form a separate school board; to give such board all the rights and powers of common school boards; to erect a single board in a town or city; gave the trustees power to fix their own limits to their separate school sections, and their own standard of qualification for separate school teachers, and to claim their share not only of all legislative grants but also of all provincial or municipal school funds and of all taxes for school and library purposes in proportion to the population which they claimed to represent. This bill was immediately answered by Dr. Ryerson in a thorough and able exposure of its objectionable features involving, as he truly and emphatically asserted, "the complete destruction of our public school system." Notwithstanding this opposition of Dr. Ryerson, six weeks later and without his knowledge or consent, a bill very similar in many of its provisions was introduced into the legislative council by Sir E. P. Taché. Mr. Gamble at once telegraphed Dr. Ryerson and mailed him a copy of the bill.

Dr. Ryerson telegraphed the Hon. J. A. Macdonald asking that the bill should be restricted to Roman Catholics, and should not admit the separate schools to the municipal council assessment. To these amendments Mr. Macdonald assented and the bill, as so largely amended, became the Roman Catholic separate school law.

Dr. Ryerson always denied all responsibility for this act, though as amended he considered it harmless in its effect upon the common school system. In his view, the bulwark of that system lay in the principle that the machinery of the government could be used to raise funds only for the support of common schools and not for the purposes of sectarian education, and that no individual should be compelled to contribute to such education without his consent. The most objectionable feature of the law was its utterly inefficient provision for the qualification of teachers, but this was a defect which concerned only those who voluntarily placed themselves under it. The large majority by which the bill was passed even in amended form was secured from Lower Canadian votes which stood forty-five to two, those from the upper province, which alone was affected, being sixteen to fifteen. Dr. Ryerson gives great credit to Church of England members on both sides of the House for their aid in amending the bill and supporting the common school system, naming Gamble, Stevenson, Robinson, Langton and Crawford.

It will be seen that in this second stage the separate school question had now passed into the purely political arena. It was no longer a question of what was in the best interests of the country, or of what was wise, and just, and practicable in the furtherance of those interests, but rather this: what are the demands of the contending parties? and what votes and influence can they bring to bear to enforce those demands? This political relation gave to the separate school question not only a new though extrinsic interest and importance, but also the fierce intensity of conflict which marked its history for the next few years. It became part of a new constitutional question in Canadian politics, should Upper Canadian interests be determined by Lower Canadian votes?—a question the solution of which was tentatively sought in the principle of the double majority, but which finally forced all parties to turn to the broader principle of federal government now embodied in the constitution of our Dominion and its provinces.

Thus, once again, Dr. Ryerson found himself at the very centre of an intensely active and highly important political movement in our Canadian history. But in this movement he was now not so much the active participator as the passive occasion. On the school question the position of the extreme parties was now clearly defined. The Liberal party demanded the abolition of separate schools, and whatever measure of secularization was necessary

for that purpose. The Roman Catholic authorities sought the complete control of the education of the children of their church, holding that education must be moral and religious as well as secular or else be defective and even injurious. Dr. Ryerson stood between the two parties, by turns fighting the battles of each, and yet hated and assailed by both. He recognized that the Roman Catholics had conscientious convictions, and also vested rights which he felt bound to respect and protect. But while he maintained this position, he recognized the vested rights, the conscientious convictions, and the political equity which required that the rights of the Roman Catholic population should not infringe upon the equally important and much more extensive rights of the great body of citizens who desired an effective system of common schools.

With this position of Dr. Ryerson, the Hon. John A. Macdonald, now coming into the foremost rank in the Conservative party, was in full sympathy, although through the exigency of party interests he was forced to compromise, as in the Taché Bill. The Liberal party, on the other hand, identified Dr. Ryerson, Mr. Macdonald, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy as the common foes of a common school system, and thus the conflict between Dr. Ryerson and Mr. Brown was for some years of a most intensely bitter and even personal character.

In the meantime the separate school party were

very far from confining their efforts to the legislative and political arena. Every effort was put forth to bring the provisions of the separate school law into operation. Even under the act of 1853 the Roman Catholic separate schools were increased from thirteen in 1852 to forty-four in 1855. Under the Taché Act the number was raised to one hundred in 1857-8, attended by nearly 10,000 pupils, an increase due, perhaps, not so much to any change in the law as to the active efforts of the ecclesiastical authorities, of which the lenten pastoral of Bishop Charbonnel in 1856 may be cited as an example. In this pastoral he says:—"Catholic electors who do not use their electoral power on behalf of separate schools are guilty of mortal sin. Likewise parents who do not make the sacrifices necessary to secure such schools, or send their children to mixed schools."

During this period the agitation of the public mind over this question was such that the governor-general, Sir Edmund Head, requested from Dr. Ryerson a special report. In this report, of which Dr. Hodgins has published extracts in his comprehensive history of separate schools in Upper Canada, he exposes very clearly the attitude of the Roman Catholic hierarchy at this period toward the common school system, summing it up in these words:—"It is this double aggression by Roman Catholic bishops and their supporters, in assailing on the one hand our public schools and school

system, and invading what has been acknowledged as sacred constitutional rights of individuals and municipalities; and, on the other hand, in demanding the erection and support at the public expense of a Roman Catholic hierarchal school system, which has aroused to so great an extent the people of Upper Canada against permitting the continuance any longer of the provisions of the law for separate schools." At the same time he deprecates the interference of bishops and priests in Lower Canada, or of their representatives, with the school system of Upper Canada, pointing out that "there has been no interference in Upper Canada with the school system of Lower Canada." Many of the most essential parts of this report, re-written and enlarged, were laid before parliament in the same year.

The next important attempt at separate school legislation began in 1860 with the introduction of a separate school bill by Mr. R. W. Scott, then member for Ottawa. Mr. Scott's first attempt failed, and was repeated in 1861 and 1862 with the same result. Finally, in 1863, a modified bill to which Dr. Ryerson consented was passed. Mr. Scott was a Liberal in politics, as well as a Roman Catholic in religion. His introduction of the question thus marks a new phase of the movement.

Early in 1860 Bishop Charbonnel had resigned the charge of the diocese of Toronto, and Bishop Lynch became his successor. His policy does not

appear to have been as aggressive as that of his predecessor. There was now no attempt to break up the public school system by provisions for a general introduction of denominational schools. Several provisions aimed at the removal of disabilities which Roman Catholics had imposed upon themselves by the Taché Act, which, in 1855, repealed indiscriminately the provisions of 1853. Other clauses attempted once more to introduce provisions to which Dr. Ryerson had from the outset been inflexibly opposed, especially two, the distribution of all school funds according to population, and the employment in any form of the municipal authorities to collect funds for the purposes of denominational schools.

In 1862, Dr. Ryerson, willing to concede the more equitable parts of Mr. Scott's bill, and if possible to reconcile the authorities of the Roman Catholic church to the public system of common schools, at least through the country generally, proposed the name of Bishop Lynch as a member of the council of public instruction for Upper Canada, finding, as he says, that his views on the subject "were moderate and constitutional, appreciating the rights of citizens and the institutions of our country, as well as the interests and institutions of their own church." He accordingly prepared a draft of a bill repealing the objectionable requirement of an oath to returns, providing for separate schools in incorporated villages as in towns and

cities, enabling separate school trustees to form union school sections for their purposes, and exempting the ratepayer who has once formally given notice that he is a supporter of a separate school from the necessity of annual renewal of such notice, substituting therefor a return by the trustees of the names of all supporters of their school.

This draft seems never to have come before the House, as Mr. Scott again introduced his bill with the two objectionable demands. These were, however, removed in committee, and to the bill as thus amended, Dr. Ryerson assented on condition that the bill should be accepted as a settlement of the question by the authorities of the Roman Catholic Church and should receive the assent of the government. For this purpose the bill was thoroughly revised by Dr. Ryerson in consultation with the representatives of the Roman Catholic Church, accepted by them, two copies prepared, and the assent of the government asked to Mr. Scott's proceeding with the bill in this form. Of it Dr. Ryerson says:—"Everyone who examines the bill will see that it brings back the school system in respect to separate schools as near as possible to what it was before the passing of the Roman Catholic Separate School Bill of 1855 . . . . an object I have been most anxious to accomplish."

The parliament was now, however, approaching that period of perplexity which finally forced confederation to the front, and the defeat of the

government laid the school bill over for another year. Early in the following session, under the Sandfield Macdonald administration, Mr. Scott once more introduced the bill, and it was accepted as a government measure and passed shortly before another change of administration. In the final vote the double majority principle announced by Mr. Sandfield Macdonald failed, as there was an Upper Canadian majority of ten against it. The act was, notwithstanding, assented to on May 5th, and so became law a week before the defeat of the ministry.

The passage of this Separate School Act of 1863 may be regarded as the final settlement of the principle of Roman Catholic separate schools as a part of the public school system of Canada. In that part of his school policy in which Dr. Ryerson hoped through careful and impartial administration of the common schools to make them so acceptable to the Roman Catholic population that separate schools would disappear as undesirable, he had not been able to succeed. In spite of his liberal measures and strenuous efforts, the vigorous policy of the Roman Catholic authorities from 1852 onward gave strong and rapid growth to the separate schools. This growth was stimulated, as is always the case, by the efforts of the opposite party to wipe out separate schools by adverse legislation. The number of separate schools then in existence was 120, attended by 15,859 pupils, nearly one fourth of the Roman Catholic school population of the province.

Yet this fact afforded no ground for discouragement as to the success of the public schools, which commanded a voluntary attendance of more than four-fifths of the whole school population of the province, and employed the services of 333 Roman Catholic teachers, or nearly twice as many as were employed in the separate schools.

But while these figures prove that the strength and comprehensive character of the common school system had been maintained without serious break, they also show that the separate schools had grown too strong to be overthrown by any form of policy, and that Dr. Ryerson was now wisely accepting the logic of facts, in making every provision for their equitable treatment and their highest efficiency. On the defensive side of his policy, he had certainly succeeded, and had foiled every attempt either to make the municipal authorities an agency for the maintenance of denominational schools, or to make the property of any but their declared supporters contribute thereto. They were thus left to work their own way on the voluntary principle, a right to which certainly every citizen is entitled in matters affecting his religious convictions, and for this purpose they were freed from all contributions to the public system of common schools, an exemption which, if not imperative on rigid political principles, is certainly fair as between Christian neighbours.

But notwithstanding the importance of the posi-

tion thus reached, the story of Dr. Ryerson's struggle with this problem is not yet quite complete. In 1865 a new agitation of the separate school question was begun in Kingston and Toronto the principal importance of which was the occasion which it furnished for one of Dr. Ryerson's ablest deliverances on the subject. After meeting the main objections of his opponents and reviewing the whole history of the question from 1840 onward, showing that no privilege was granted to common school trustees which was not accorded to separate schools, with the single exception that they were not permitted to employ the municipal machinery for sectarian purposes, and pointing out the injustice of using general taxation for denominational purposes against the will of the majority, he states the fundamental political principle involved in the question as follows:—"Separate schools cannot be claimed on any ground of right, as I have often shown in discussing the subject in former years. All that any citizen can claim as a right on this subject is equal and impartial protection with every other citizen. All that can be claimed or granted beyond this must be on the ground of compact or of expediency or indulgence. I have ever regarded the existence of the separate school provisions of the law in the light of a compact commencing with the union of the Canadas; and, as such, in behalf of the public, I have endeavoured to maintain it faithfully and liberally. But if the supporters of separate

schools continue to violate that compact, as they have done repeatedly, by denouncing it, and demanding its modification and extension, then they forfeit all right to the original terms and conditions of it, and reduce the whole question to one of expediency, in which light I will briefly consider it.

"I think no one will maintain that separate schools are expedient for the interests of the state. Nay, those interests are more or less injured by every act of class legislation, and the strength of the state is weakened by every sectional division which its citizens have created by law. If it was a source of individual pride and of the strength of the state, in ancient days, for every man to say '*Romanus sum*'—'I am a Roman'—so would it be now, under a legislation of equal rights and privileges, without the shadow of distinction in regard to sect or party, for a man to say 'I am a Canadian.' For every man to feel that he stands in all respects upon equal ground of right and privilege with every other man in relation to the state and law, must best contribute to the true interests and real strength of the state, and best respond to the spirit and principles of free government. Upon public grounds, therefore, the law for separate schools cannot be maintained."

After pointing out at a considerable length that separate schools are equally inexpedient for the educational, social and political interests of Roman Catholics themselves, he concludes thus:—"The fact

is that the tendency of the public mind and of the institutions of Upper Canada is to confederation and not to isolation, to united effort, and not to divisions and hostile effort in those things in which all have a common interest. The efforts to establish and extend separate schools, though often energetic and made at great sacrifice, are a struggle against the instincts of Canadian society, against the necessities of a sparsely populated country, against the social and political, present and future interests of the parents and youth separated from their fellow-citizens. It is not the separate school law which renders such efforts so fitful, feeble, and little successful; their paralysis is caused by a higher than human law—the law of circumstances, the law of nature, the law of interest, if not the law of duty from parent to child.

"If, therefore, the present separate school law is not to be maintained as a final settlement of the question, and if the legislature finds it necessary to legislate on the separate school question again, I pray that it will abolish the separate school law altogether; and to this recommendation I am forced, after having long used my best efforts to maintain and give the fullest and most liberal application to successive separate school acts; and after twenty years experience and superintendence of our common school system."

This discussion was followed by a single abortive effort to secure further separate school legislation

in 1866. In 1867 the question was finally settled by the following provisions of the British North America Act:—"In and for each province, the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education, subject and according to the following provisions:—

"1. Nothing in any such law shall prejudicially affect any right or privilege with respect to denominational schools which any class of persons have by law in the province at the union.

"2. All the powers, privileges and duties at the union conferred and imposed in Upper Canada on the separate schools and school trustees of the Queen's Roman Catholic subjects shall be and the same are hereby extended to the dissentient schools of the Queen's Protestant and Roman Catholic subjects in Quebec."

These two fundamental provisions are followed by right of appeal to the governor-general-in-council, and the right of remedial legislation by the parliament of Canada.

Before dismissing this important subject we may give a brief notice to the efforts of the Anglican Church in Upper Canada to secure separate church schools. The first of these efforts preceded Dr. Ryerson's appointment, and was made by Bishop Strachan in 1841 and 1843. The effort was renewed in 1850. Of this effort Dr. Ryerson says:—"An amendment to the nineteenth section was concocted and agreed upon by the clerical Roman Catholic

and high Episcopalian parties, by which any twelve members of either church could demand a separate school in any school section of Upper Canada. The leaders on both sides of this new combination were very active, and in the course of a few days boasted that they would have a majority of fourteen or twenty votes against the government on the nineteenth section of the bill. I saw at once that the proposed amendment, if carried, would destroy the school system, and in order to break up the combination and save the school system, I proposed to amend the nineteenth section of the bill so as to secure the right of establishing separate schools to the applicants (Roman Catholics) as provided in the school acts of 1843 and 1846."

The Taché Bill, as introduced, embodied a similar provision, opening the door to a general system of denominational schools, and very strenuous efforts, as we have seen, were required to secure the elimination of its objectionable features. Even during the legislation of 1860-63 the attempt was renewed, but in all these cases the effort was defeated by the liberal and intelligent stand taken by lay members of the Church of England.

In closing this review of the separate school agitation it would be very wrong to attribute other than honourable motives to the supporters of the movement. Denominational ambitions may, of course, have had an influence; but behind all else there was, without doubt, a deep conviction of the im-

portance, or rather necessity of religion and morals in the education of the young. In that conviction Dr. Ryerson shared, and his whole lifework was proof of its deep hold upon his own mind. As a result, from the beginning he sought to make the common schools Christian in a broad, comprehensive, unsectarian sense of the term. Beyond that he provided facilities for more specific religious teaching after school hours by the pastors of the several churches, and took great pains to interest them in this work. It cannot be said that this last provision has been a success. The children generally cannot be held after four o'clock for another hour of school, even by the minister. But side by side with the school system was growing up in all the churches an independent and purely voluntary system of moral and religious education, in the Sunday school, the Bible class, the Sunday school teachers' normal class, the catechumen class, and in the efforts after higher religious intelligence of the young people's societies. In these lies the true solution of the moral and religious side of education, a solution in which the conscientious and pious zeal of our churches should keep pace with the intelligent and harmonious work of the state.

CHAPTER X

THE GRAMMAR OR HIGH SCHOOLS

THE foundation of the present high school system of Ontario was laid in 1798 when half a million acres of public lands were set apart for education, to include both a university and four secondary schools. This wise provision was vitiated by the class-spirit in which it was proposed to be carried into effect; but before it was made available by the Act of 1807, the growth of the country expanded it into a provision for a system of district grammar schools, at first eight in number. Each of these district schools was placed under the complete control of a board of trustees for the district, appointed by the lieutenant-governor-in-council. These trustees appointed the teacher, made regulations for the school and issued the certificates under which the teacher received from the government the legislative appropriation for his salary which was £100 for each school. No provision was made for uniformity in curriculum or text books, nor was any standard of qualification prescribed for the teacher, and the governor-in-council was the only central authority supervising the appointments made by the trustees. In 1819 this act was amended so as to require the trustees to hold an annual

examination of the school in which they were required to take part and also to make an annual report to the governor of the state of the school, the number of pupils, the branches taught and any other matters pertaining to the prosperity of the school. Provision was also made for ten *free* scholars in each school. In 1831 a proposal was made in the legislature to make these schools free with a grant of £400 a year to each school, and in 1832, a bill was introduced to place them under the direction of a general board of education for the province, but neither of these measures was carried through.

In 1839 a new Grammar School Act was passed under which the schools were conducted until 1853. By this act the district schools were henceforth legally known as grammar schools, and were thus brought under the provisions of the royal grant of 1797. For each school the board of trustees was appointed as before to have the superintendence of the school and to receive the monies authorized to be paid for its support. The rules and regulations for the conduct and good government of all the schools were placed in the hands of the council of King's College, thus bringing them for the first time under a uniform system. A not less important provision of the act was a more definite and liberal financial policy and provision, under which a permanent grammar school fund was created from the investment of the proceeds of the sale of the old school lands and from a new appropriation of

250,000 acres for this purpose; and the proceeds of this investment were placed in the hands of King's College council for distribution according to the needs of the schools. In addition to the £100 heretofore paid to each district school, a further grant of an additional £100 each was authorized for the establishment under certain conditions of two additional schools in each district, and a sum of £200 to aid in the erection of a suitable schoolhouse in each district. A full financial as well as educational report was also required from each district board of trustees. The council of King's College was further authorized to apply a portion of the monies from invested endowment in aid of the grammar schools, and to extend aid from this and the grammar school revenue at their disposal to four additional grammar schools in any district where they deemed it necessary. Under the impulse of this act the grammar schools, then twelve in number, rose by 1842 to twenty-five, and by 1845 to thirty in number; and when to the more liberal provisions of the law there was added the stimulus and even competition of the new common school system, the number of grammar schools was rapidly multiplied, rising in 1853 to sixty-four. Many of these new schools were of a respectable character and in some places the old schools were doing good work. But the influence of the university council in their direction was exceedingly feeble, the majority of well-prepared university matriculants were furnished

by Upper Canada College, and the majority of the old schools continued to be schools of a class, doing, with the addition of Latin, elementary work in English, mathematics and science below the standard of the best common schools, and taking their pupils from private schools in which they were taught the first rudiments. There was still no legal standard of qualification for the teacher, and the teacher was not seldom the local curate. There was no provision for inspection, and although the number of schools was multiplied, there was no guarantee that the large amount of public monies expended on their maintenance was profitably employed. They were now teaching 3,221 pupils, of whom 102 were returned as unable to read and 285 unable to write. About one-sixth (556) studied Latin, and one-ninth algebra and Euclid. The expenditure on these schools was £10,743. 11s. 1d., or nearly $43,000—$13.35 for each pupil.

The situation was thus one which demanded the attention of the legislature, and the Grammar School Act accompanying the new University Act of 1853 was the result. By this act the grammar schools were separated from the university in administration and made for the first time a part of the public system of which Dr. Ryerson was the superintendent, and it is with the preparation and administration of this act that his work on a grammar or secondary school system begins.

He began by placing the whole system on a more

popular basis by vesting the appointment of trustees in the hands of the municipal councils and providing a separate board for each school. This was effected gradually, the change of system being completed in three years. At the same time the responsibility for the support of the schools was placed upon the municipalities acting through their trustees, the legislative grant and the income from the invested proceeds of the grammar school lands forming a grammar school fund to aid the municipalities in their work. These two radical changes brought the grammar schools under the same fundamental principles as the common schools. They henceforth belonged not to the government but to the people. They were immediately controlled by their representatives and supported by their money contributed either as fees or by direct municipal taxation. The whole body of the people were thus brought to feel a direct and financial as well as educational interest in their secondary schools.

The third principle of the new act was equally important and also on a line with the constitution of the common school system. This was an efficient system, not only for the distribution of grants in aid, but also for making proper regulations for the government of the schools, and for their inspection. This system was administered as in the common schools through the council of public instruction, of which the president of University College and of the other colleges affiliated to the

provincial university were now made members for this purpose, and through the chief superintendent of education. These provisions included a standard of qualification for all teachers in the grammar schools, and the appointment of a provincial board of examination for that purpose; a curriculum which covered all subjects required for matriculation in the provincial university as well as the elements of science, needed for industrial and commercial education; provision of proper text books for use in the schools; directions as to organization of the schools, and provision of suitable apparatus and equipment, including provision for a system of meteorological observations throughout the province, and the appointment of provincial inspectors of grammar schools. The chief superintendent was authorized to require complete reports of the grammar schools as of the public schools according to forms provided, and again as in the common schools satisfactory compliance with these regulations was made the condition of receiving the annual government grant. The trustee boards were also clothed with all the necessary powers for the efficient discharge of their duties placing them on a footing in this respect approaching to that of the common school trustees, to whom such large powers had been safely entrusted under the common school acts.

It is not too much to say that here again these fundamental principles, few and simple as they are,

brought order out of chaos. To call into exercise the local interest, authority and responsibility of the people, to aid it by judicious grants, to direct it by wise regulation and inspection, these were the simple principles from which the practical genius of this man of the people constructed one of the most efficient systems of education that the world has known. These principles once established were never disturbed, and all subsequent amendments were minor provisions for their more perfect development.

The first of these provisions to become effective were the appointment of inspectors and the proper qualification of masters. At the end of three years thirty-eight out of sixty-one headmasters were graduates in arts—twenty-three of Canadian and thirteen of British universities, while two held American degrees. Of the rest, ten had qualified by examination, the others holding their position in virtue of appointment before the passing of the act.

The first inspectors, the Rev. Wm. Ormiston, M.A., and T. J. Robertson, M.A., were men of great ability, thorough scholarship, experience in educational work, and masters in the organization and management of schools, and under their influence the schools rapidly improved in system and method of work. Pupils fit only for primary schools were excluded by means of entrance examinations, the pupils were properly classified, and something like an orderly curriculum of school work was intro-

duced. Still the work of the first few years served rather to bring to light the defects of the schools than to bring them up to a satisfactory degree of perfection. The masters were under-paid, the school houses defective and unsuitable, the schools without needed equipment, many of them without even suitable maps and blackboards, and the county councils unwilling to furnish trustees with funds, since they looked on the schools as belonging to the towns and villages, while these complained that the control of the schools through appointment of trustees was not in their hands. Notwithstanding these complaints it did not seem desirable to change the law, as the schools were intended not for the benefit of the immediate locality but of the entire county or section of the county in which and for which they were established.

To obviate these financial difficulties in villages, and even in some towns and cities, the trustees took advantage of the provision for the union of the grammar with the common school, giving for the united school the powers of local taxation enjoyed by the common school board. In 1858 no less than thirty-nine of the seventy-five grammar schools were so united. The report of the inspector shows that while such union resulted in financial advantages, it was detrimental to the higher work of the school. In fact Dr. Ormiston soon reported that it furnished satisfactory work neither in the common school nor in the grammar school depart-

ment. The motive—a cheap school—reduced it too often to an attempt to carry on the union school with a staff sufficient for a good common school. Under these circumstances the high school work was reduced to a minimum, and that minimum became an incubus on the common school. Notwithstanding these difficulties a steady and gratifying progress was made in the character of the grammar school work and also in the buildings and equipment used for grammar school purposes. This was especially the case in the western and central parts of the province. The attendance of county as against town pupils was gradually increased. The influence of the universities as directing the curriculum of the grammar schools was making itself felt. And while the intense local interest attached to the common schools was not yet awakened for the secondary schools, a deeper and more intelligent interest was being created.

After ten years experience of the new law, in which the schools had increased in number from 64 to 95 and the attendance from 3,221 to 5,589, while the classical pupils had risen from 556 to 2,825, we meet the next important movement in advance. In the year 1863, the Rev. George Paxton Young was appointed inspector of grammar schools. This was another example of Dr. Ryerson's peculiar wisdom in the choice of able co-workers. In his reports for 1864 and 1865, Mr. Young presents an exhaustive statement of the still existing defects in

the grammar school system, and of the remedies which in his judgment should be applied.

The first point to which Mr. Young calls attention is the abuse of the power of county councils to establish new schools whenever their proportion of the grammar school fund enabled them to do so without lowering the grant to each school beneath the prescribed minimum of $200. This results, as he finds, in the establishment of weak grammar schools. In fact Mr. Checkley, his predecessor, had already reported some of these as positively inferior to good common schools. This undue multiplication of schools he found, further, to affect the attendance, finances, and consequently the efficiency of the existing schools. It was, besides, bringing the whole system of grammar schools into contempt, and depressing the average work of the common schools by substituting poor grammar schools for good common schools. The remedy for this abuse Mr. Young leaves to the chief superintendent, though he quietly suggests the application of Dr. Ryerson's old device of a solid financial requirement.

Next to this undue multiplication of schools, Mr. Young places the evils growing out of the union of the common with the grammar schools. He reports that now three out of every five grammar schools in the province have common schools united with them. He points out the cause of this in the financial provisions of the law, giving the united board of trustees a power of direct taxation

not possessed by the grammar school trustees alone. He also shows the advantage which it possesses of bringing the whole body of common school pupils into touch with the higher work and exciting their ambition to continue their studies beyond the limits of the common school programme. But he finds that these advantages are far more than counterbalanced by the resulting evils which Dr. Ormiston had already pointed out. It put upon the grammar school master the burden of instructing the common school pupils in their higher work, to the detriment of his own curriculum. It filled up the common school department with inferior teachers, and led to cheaper and poorer schools in both departments.

While Mr. Young, in common with his predecessors, deplored the still existing defects of buildings and equipment, and urged strong pressure for reform in this direction, he does not consider it advisable to extend the power of direct taxation to a second board of trustees. He considers rather that pressure should be brought to bear upon the municipal councils to secure the needed improvements. The last item of Mr. Young's exceedingly able report deals with improvements in the method of teaching such subjects as algebra, geometry, and the Latin and Greek languages, and strikes at an evil which has persisted to our own time, the lack of thorough elementary instruction, and the use of methods suitable only for advanced pupils.

On this report was founded Dr. Ryerson's Act of 1865 "for the further improvement of grammar schools in Upper Canada." The main features of this act were:—

1. A change in the method of distributing the grammar school fund. The old distinction between senior and other schools was abolished. The county lines were also virtually abolished as a basis of distribution according to population; and the fund was distributed directly to the several schools of the whole province according to their works, *i.e.*, the average attendance of *bona fide* grammar school pupils. To prevent abuse here the entrance examination to the grammar school was placed entirely in the hands of the inspector, also in this way securing uniformity throughout the province. This provision at once put a premium upon really strong schools.

2. To maintain these schools efficiently it was required that in every case a local contribution, outside of fees, equal to the grant from the grammar school fund should be raised by the municipality or by the trustees.

3. To create a more directly local interest in the school, in towns and incorporated villages one half the trustee board was appointed by the council of the town or village and one half by the county, while the cities were separated from the county for grammar school purposes, except in the rare instances where the city was the location of the

only grammar school in the county, in which case the county council appointed one half. These enactments were of themselves a strong influence against the undue multiplication of schools; but in the same direction was the further proviso that no new school should be established until it could secure a grant of $300 from the grammar school funds without diminishing the grants to existing schools. Provision was also made for the dissolution of the union between grammar and common school boards by the vote of a majority of the united board. One of the last but not least important of the new provisions made a university degree necessary for the head master of a grammar school.

The new law was immediately followed up by a revised and thoroughly graded programme of studies for the pupils of the grammar schools, accompanied by a completely revised code of regulations. These regulations were scarcely less important than the act, as conformity with these was a condition of participation in the grammar school fund. By these regulations elementary English was excluded from the grammar school programme, and the schools were made strictly secondary schools. A programme of modern languages was provided for students who did not wish to take classics, and to this course girls were, at the option of the trustees, admitted on the same terms as boys. This step, taken apparently with a good deal of hesitation and conditioned upon the assent of the trustees,

was one of the most important of all the new features now introduced.

These new departures were still considered somewhat tentative, and in his succeeding report Mr. Young examines with care their results. The expected diminution of the number of grammar schools did not follow. Two fell off the first year, but from that time there was a steady though more moderate rate of increase. The non-classical course for grammar school pupils was another feature which did not meet with large response in the public demand. The inspector himself, while not approving of this course, was decidedly in favour of it for the girls; but although the girls were not encouraged in this direction, their avidity for Latin seemed almost increased by the fact that it had been so long to them forbidden ground. In five years the attendance on the grammar schools had risen to 7,280, an increase of 36 per cent., while the number studying Latin had risen to 6,658, an increase of 81 per cent. Greek had in the same period experienced a relative decline, falling from $12\frac{3}{4}$ to $10\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., a decline which has continued steadily to the present time.

The transfer of the entrance examination to the inspector revealed the fact that the preparation of the pupils was still largely defective, pointing to the need of a more definite course in the public school before coming up for the entrance examination. In fact, the lack of a solid foundation in

the elementary English branches was now clearly apparent as the most serious drawback to the success of the secondary schools. The new law was also still found defective as a means of making adequate financial provision for first class schools. The trustees were, as a rule, anxious to improve the schools, but being entirely dependent upon the municipal bodies and upon fees for financial support, they were quite unable to give effect to their wishes. In the meantime the completion of confederation and the formation of the new Dominion had given to the country the impulse of a new national life. With that life Dr. Ryerson, a Canadian of the Canadians, was himself in the warmest sympathy. The provincial legislature, to whom the whole field of education was now entrusted, was likely to be a far more progressive body in the matter of educational legislation than the united parliament of the past, and Dr. Ryerson, under its auspices, once more addressed himself to the work of advancing and perfecting both the public and high school systems.

The legislation of 1874 and its immediate results in the new regulations issued by the council of public instruction, was without doubt the most important in the history of education from 1850 onward. Its chief features were the following:—

1. It introduced the representative principle into the composition of the council of public instruction, thereby bringing it into distinct touch with

the universities, the high schools and the public schools and inspectors. This feature, which might have been productive of most important practical results, was discontinued at the reorganization of the education department under a minister of education.

2. It reorganized the grammar schools as high schools and collegiate institutes, providing in the latter for a far more complete programme of secondary education than had ever been attempted in the country before.

3. To maintain this advanced programme efficiently, the trustees of the high schools and collegiate institutes were now for the first time authorized to make requisition upon the municipal council or councils of their district, for such sums in addition to the government grant and its equivalent, as were necessary for the maintenance of the school, thus placing them in this respect on an equality with the public school trustees. It will be seen that this provision was carried into effect only after twenty years of effort in this direction. The provision for new buildings or grounds was still left to the voluntary action of the municipal bodies.

4. The union of public with high school boards was discontinued, and the provision for dissolving existing unions was re-enacted.

5. In the distribution of the high school grant the principle of payment according to results was now first introduced. The regulations under which

these results were to be ascertained were placed in the hands of the council of public instruction.

6. The conditions of the establishment of collegiate institutes were definitely fixed by law; four qualified masters must be fully employed in teaching the subjects of the prescribed curriculum, and a daily average of not less than sixty male pupils must be pursuing the study of Latin or Greek. On fulfilment of these conditions the lieutenant-governor-in-council was authorized to confer on any high school the name of collegiate institute, with an additional grant from the grammar school fund of $750.

Under these provisions of the law the council of public instruction, with Dr. Ryerson at its head, proceeded with great energy in their important work. The programme of studies was once more completely revised, and especially for the work of the collegiate institutes, extended in the lines of modern literature and science. Three able men were appointed as inspectors, devoting their entire time to this work, and representing by their eminent attainments as specialists, the three great branches of the curriculum, classics, mathematics and science, and modern literature, especially English. But perhaps the most influential step of all taken by the council was the establishment of the intermediate examination at the end of the work of the second form as a means of testing the results of the work of the school as a basis for the distribution of

the grant. This was the first introduction in a truly influential form of the examination system into our school work below the university. In twenty-five years it has extended its influence, until now it dominates our whole educational work.

The devising of these last measures for the perfecting of the high school system, we may call Dr. Ryerson's last great contribution to the educational work of Upper Canada. For twenty years he had devoted his energies to the perfecting of the high schools, as for thirty he had laboured on the public school system. In both cases he had found it necessary to overcome the obstacles arising from popular ignorance, apathy, or penuriousness, by wise enactments and patient effort. He was especially patient of delay. With remarkable accuracy of judgment he was able to discern the true ends to be ultimately attained, and to gauge the ability and willingness of the majority of the people to furnish the means for their attainment; and we have found him waiting patiently and working steadfastly for the accomplishment of such ends as the establishment of free common schools, or properly sustained high schools. And this labour he continued for ten or even twenty years, never losing sight of his ultimate object, employing gentle pressure whenever necessary, but always avoiding a friction which would render the whole system unpopular. It was doubtless of great advantage to him during his life-long labour that his work, like the administration of justice, stood just

outside the field of politics, and was thus not subject to the ordinary contingencies of political changes. If it made his difficulties a little greater, and his progress somewhat more tardy, as he overcame difficulties with the people, difficulties with municipal bodies, difficulties with the legislature and the government of the day, this very slowness of growth and absence of startling change made his work in the end more strong and gave it a deeper foundation in the habits as well as the confidence of the people. Retiring from this work in the seventy-fourth year of his age, after devoting thirty years of his matured manhood and great endowments to this service of his country, with an old man's pardonable pride, he thus, in his last report, sums up the results of his work:—

"In concluding this report for 1874, I may be permitted to note the progress which has been effected in the development of the public school system, of which I took charge in 1844. At that time there were 2,706 public school teachers, in 1874 there were 5,736, increase 3,030. In 1844 the amount paid for salaries of teachers was $206,856; in 1874 the amount paid for salaries of teachers was $1,440,894. In 1844 the total amount raised and expended for public school purposes was $275,000; in 1874 it was $2,865,332, increase $2,590,332. In 1844 the number of pupils in the public schools was 96,756; in 1874 the number of pupils was 464,047, increase 367,291. In 1844 the number

of school-houses was 2,495, in 1874, 4,827, increase 2,332. The number of log school-houses in 1844 was 1,334; in 1874, 115, decrease 1,229. The number of frame school-houses in 1844 was 1,028; in 1874, 2,080, increase 1,052. The number of stone school-houses in 1844 was 84; in 1874, 463, increase 379. The number of brick school-houses in 1844 was 49; in 1874, 1,169, increase 1,120. These are mere naked figures, which convey no idea of the improved character, furniture and fittings of the school-houses, the improved character, uniformity and greater cheapness of the text books, the introduction of maps, globes, blackboards, etc., in the schools, the improved character, qualifications and position of teachers and their teaching. In 1844 maps and globes were unknown in the public schools; up to 1874, 2,785 globes and 47,413 maps and charts have been furnished to the schools, nearly all of which are now manufactured in the country. In 1844 there were no public libraries or library books; in 1874 there were 1,334 public school libraries, containing 266,046 volumes, provided and sent out by the department. In 1844 there were no prize books distributed as rewards for good conduct, diligence and success in the schools; up to 1874, 766,645 prize books had been sent out by the department and distributed in the schools. In this summary statement no mention has been made of the normal schools and their work, the standard of qualification and examination

of teachers, and the improved organization and inspection of the schools.

"In regard to the grammar or high schools the duty was imposed upon me in 1852 of framing and administering the law respecting this important class of our public institutions. The number of these schools then in existence was 84; the number in 1874 was 108, increase 24. The number of pupils in 1852 was 2,643; in 1874 it was 7,871, increase 5,228. In 1852 the amount of legislative grant or grammar school fund was $20,567; in 1874 it was $75,553; besides a sum equal to half that amount, raised by county and city councils, and corporate powers in boards of trustees to provide additional means for the payment of teachers and the building and repair of school houses, many of which are now amongst the finest school buildings in the province. In 1852 the amount paid for the salaries of teachers was $38,533; in 1874 it was $179,946, increase $141,413. In 1852 the grammar schools received pupils from their 'a-b-c's' upwards; now pupils are only admitted on an entrance examination from the fourth form of the public schools, and the high schools have uniform programmes and text books, and are under the semi-annual inspection of three able inspectors. It is by the coöperation of successive administrations of government and parliaments, and the noble exertions of the country at large that this great work has been developed and advanced to its present state."

Such was the kindly and honourable farewell of a great man to the country for which he had wrought out his noble work. That work was built upon such secure foundations that not only its permanency but also its perpetual expansion was insured. It was sustained by the common sense and best feelings of all the people. It is now more than a quarter of a century since this report was issued, and the statistics of the first year of the new century are in our hands, showing 5,663 public schools, 379 separate schools, 414,619 pupils in the public schools and 43,978 in the separate schools, and a total expenditure for schools of $4,328,682. In the high schools there is an attendance of 22,523 pupils, with a total expenditure of $728,132. While these figures indicate the growth among us of a population who are neglecting the education of their children, the vast increase in the expenditure for education shows the continuous growth of interest in and appreciation of this work.

CHAPTER XI

LATER LITERARY WORK

TOWARDS the close of his long and honoured life, Dr. Ryerson was for a long time one of a very few surviving actors in the stirring and important events of the early years of the nineteenth century. His intimate knowledge of the past was frequently of great use in the conduct of affairs ecclesiastical and civil, and it was frequently sought and highly prized. Those who had the benefit of his experience and counsel could not but think themselves happy, and they could not but think that the time would soon come when his genial presence could no more be found amongst them, and the rich treasure-house of his memory would be forever darkened and sealed up by death. Hence it came that he was again and again importuned to commit to writing the story of his life, and to leave some record of the observations and experiences of his long and eventful career. It was felt that such a record would not only be interesting as a story of the beginnings of our Canadian life, but it would be helpful as a guide to a true policy for the present and the future—a policy well grounded on the foundations of the past. And it was but natural that such a man would love to tell the

story of his life, and that all who knew him would love to hear the story told.

It was not till about six years before his death that Dr. Ryerson found time to enter seriously upon the work in question. The makers of history are not often at the same time the writers of history, and Dr. Ryerson was engaged in making the history of his country till he had passed three years beyond the three score years and ten. This was in 1876, when he retired from the office of chief superintendent of education. Between that date and his death in 1882 he prepared his three works of chief literary and historical interest. They are "The Story of My Life," "Canadian Methodism, Its Epochs and Characteristics," and "The Loyalists of America and Their Times."

The writings of Dr. Ryerson are all marked by the complete subordination of the style to the matter. Indeed there is no pretence at style. Sometimes, it is true, a certain stateliness and formality of expression appears, such as was often found in the old-time writers and speakers, and was thought becoming in treating serious things, just as the powdered wig or swallow-tailed coat was thought becoming on occasions of ceremony. As a general thing, however, the style is familiar and idiomatic, and such as marks a ready speaker rather than a writer.

"The Story of My Life," an octavo of more than six hundred pages, is in part only an autobiography.

"THE STORY OF MY LIFE"

It may have been the original intention of Dr. Ryerson to tell the story of his life as an ordinary autobiography, and some part of the work is actually written in that way. On the seventieth anniversary of his birthday he wrote a short sketch of his life. This sketch ends with an account of his first sermon, preached on Whit Sunday, 1825. The story is continued to 1832 chiefly by extracts from a diary kept from 1829 to 1832. Beyond that time the title, "The Story of My Life," if taken too literally, would not be correct, for Dr. Ryerson's work becomes less and less and the book becomes more and more the story of Dr. Ryerson's life, prepared with admirable skill and loving care by Dr. J. George Hodgins, the faithful friend and fellow-labourer of Dr. Ryerson for many years. The grand old man never found time to tell more than the beginning of the story and some later fragments, and the work as completed was prepared by Dr. Hodgins as a monument to his revered friend. It is at the same time a noble monument to the friend who made it for his friend, and for long years to come it will associate in the story of the making of Canada the names of Ryerson and Hodgins.

The second of the three works to be mentioned here is that entitled "Canadian Methodism, its Epochs and Characteristics." It is a collection of articles or essays, as they are called, prepared at the request of the Methodist conferences of London,

Toronto and Montreal, and first published in the Canadian Methodist Magazine. The essays were collected into a volume of 440 pages by the Rev. Dr. Withrow, the editor of the magazine.

When we remember the militant character of the Methodist church for many years after Dr. Ryerson had entered the ministry, and especially when we remember the heroic part taken by him in the religious conflicts forced upon his people, we cease to wonder at the warmth that sometimes is displayed in the narrative. We rather wonder that there is so little warmth and we admire the evident and heartfelt charity that forgave the offences of the past and would even forget all that the fidelity of a historian would permit him to forget. Can we wonder, for example, that in the essay on the *Loyal Origin of Methodism*, some warmth of feeling should be kindled when the men who fought, bled, and suffered exile for the flag of England, flung back the charge of disloyalty brought against them by sectarian prejudice and animosity? In like manner we may look for some indignation when the writer sees the eccentricities and vagaries of excited and uncultivated people held up as the standard of doctrine and practice of a whole church, in spite of the clear statements of their acknowledged teachers. The marvel rather was, and that marvel still remains in this new century, that men of intelligence and conscience in ordinary affairs should lose all conscience and intelligence under

the blinding influence of religious antipathy. Even to-day the caricatures and slanders of the early part of the last century are repeated, and if Dr. Ryerson were living still, he might find a respectable authority amongst his old antagonists, gravely charging him with the absurd doctrine that genuine conversions and convulsions go regularly and properly together. Such being the case, some men might say that it is vain to contend against religious prejudice for it can not be eradicated, but others would reply as would Dr. Ryerson, that we must not cease to contend against noxious weeds and venomous creatures, though we may scarcely hope to see them utterly eradicated and destroyed.

In the same volume of essays the whole story of the clergy reserves controversy is told from Dr. Ryerson's point of view. There are also five essays on the divisions amongst the Methodists in Canada. These essays are written by the Rev. John Ryerson, a brother of Dr. Ryerson and a highly respected authority on the history and usages of Canadian Methodists. There are also several essays on the relations of the Canadian Methodists to the British conference. Happily all the misunderstandings and divisions recorded in these essays have given way to union at home and the most cordial relations with the mother churches in England and the United States, and the essays may ere long be of interest to none but historians and antiquarians and book collectors.

The most considerable of Dr. Ryerson's literary works and the only one remaining for consideration in this volume is his "Loyalists of America and their Times." It is in two octavo volumes and contains over a thousand pages. For some twenty years the author had this work in mind, and as he could find time from his official duties he prepared for its publication. But long before he had any thought of authorship, and indeed from his earliest youth, he was himself in course of preparation for the task. Remote as the subject may seem to this generation, it was the great subject of family history and table talk in the home of young Egerton Ryerson. His father, Col. Joseph Ryerson, when only fifteen years of age, joined the royal army on the breaking out of the American Revolution in 1775. About eighteen months later he received an ensign's commission as a reward for distinguished service. And soon after that his skill and energy and daring secured the further promotion to a lieutenancy in the Prince of Wales Regiment. Throughout the war he fought under the royal standard and at the close of the war in 1783, when Great Britain acknowledged the independence of the United States, Joseph Ryerson and his brother Samuel left the young republic to seek new homes under the old flag in that true North that had remained loyal to the empire. The brothers went first to New Brunswick, and afterwards removed to Ontario, or Upper Canada,

as it was then called, where they settled on lands awarded to them by the government in consideration of their services and sacrifices in the cause of a united empire. Then came the experiences of pioneer settlers in the Canadian wilderness, the journeyings and toils and privations, the enterprise and success, the simple life, the neighbourly helpfulness and generous hospitality of the good old times. These all were familiar to Egerton Ryerson, as they came to him fresh from the fountains of household talk, or as they were matters of personal experience.

The manner in which Dr. Ryerson tells the story of the United Empire Loyalists and their times, is strongly suggestive of the manner in which he became familiar with the facts. His work is not history, such as we think of it from the examples of our great historians. The scenes and events are seen at short distance, and the reader is left to supply proportion and perspective to the narrative. But if the enchantment that distance lends is wanting, we find ourselves carried away by a new enchantment back into the closest contact with the persons and events described. We seem to listen to the story as it falls in the twilight from the lips of the sturdy old United Empire Loyalists and their brave wives and children. We catch the tones of strife, and pain, and pathos, and humour, and we lend ourselves to this new enchantment with no less pleasure than we do to that of the grand

panorama of Gibbon and the brilliant pictures of Macaulay.

There is, however, a distinct historic value in this work of Dr. Ryerson's in that it has helped to qualify and correct an opinion that has obtained too widely even amongst Canadians and Englishmen—the opinion that the English people were all wrong in the unhappy struggle of the American revolution, and the colonists all right. In his attempt to change what was to many of his readers a fixed opinion, Dr. Ryerson thought it necessary to produce copious documentary evidence to prove that the prevailing impressions were seriously at fault. The following is his apology for this method—a method that is to some readers tedious enough:—"The United Empire Loyalists were the losing party; their history has been written by their adversaries and strangely misrepresented. In the vindication of their character I have not offered assertion against assertion; but in correction of unjust and untrue assertions I have offered the records and documents of the actors themselves, and in their own words. To do this has rendered my history to a large extent *documentary*, instead of being a mere popular narrative. The many fictions of American writers will be found corrected and exposed in the following volumes, by authorities and facts which cannot be successfully denied. In thus availing myself so largely of the proclamations, messages, addresses, letters and records of

the times when they occurred, I have only followed the example of some of the best historians and biographers."

It is pleasing to note that the latest and best of the American historians themselves have come round to views substantially the same as those of Dr. Ryerson on some of the important issues in the history of the American revolution. And especially do they, in just and generous spirit, maintain that the men who staked all and lost all for the integrity of the empire were in numbers far more considerable than had long been supposed, and that they were in standing and character of the very best in the colonies. Dr. Ryerson does not undertake any defence of the conduct of the English government. On the contrary he condemns it in strong terms. He maintains, however, that the bad policy of compulsion was not that of the English people but of the king and of a court party whose overthrow was desired by the mass of the English people and whose success would have been as great a disaster to England as it would have been to the colonies. The true thought of England found expression in the words of Chatham and Burke and not in the message of the king and his ministers. Neither does Dr. Ryerson blame the colonists for resisting the attempt to subvert their liberties. He rather commends them for it, even to the length of taking up arms as a last resort. But he does blame them for their secession from the empire when further patience

and forbearance would inevitably have secured all their rightful demands—and their demands were in the main rightful. Moreover this would have been secured with the good will and assistance of their kin beyond the sea from whom the colonists derived their English love of liberty, and without the help of their French allies, who were actuated by the hate of England rather than by the love of America.

The part of Dr. Ryerson's book which treats of the American revolution seems to be wholly in favour of those who maintain that war is always a blunder and a crime. But we are left in some uncertainty in this case as to which party is entitled to the bad preëminence as blunderers and criminals.

We still ask ourselves sometimes what might have been if the counsels of Edmund Burke in England and Joseph Galloway in America had prevailed, and the whole British people had presented a united front against all falsehood and oppression. But the God of battles, the God of all the earth, ruled otherwise. His thoughts were not our thoughts, neither were our ways His ways. We submit to His ruling, and yet we trust that He was in those troublous times leading His people by ways they knew not to the larger and more steadfast achievement of both law and liberty for all the nations.

That portion of Dr. Ryerson's work which treats of the United Empire Loyalists in their pioneer Canadian life has always been interesting, but in

our times there is a new awakening of interest in the subject. We are now far enough away from the times of the first settlers to find a certain quaintness in all that was theirs, and we are also in danger of losing many of the traditions of those times if we do not speedily secure in some way the collections and recollections of those who stood in closest connections with the past. Dr. Ryerson's book is of special value to Canadians from this point of view. It is written by a maker and the son of a maker of Canada. And if it has something of the irregularity of all such early things, it is full of the spirit of liberty and law and truth, and buoyant with the breezy strength that makes "this Canada of ours" so dear to all Canadians.

CHAPTER XII

LATER CHURCH WORK AND CLOSING DAYS

AFTER his appointment to the office of chief superintendent of education, Dr. Ryerson still maintained both his connection with and his active influence and leadership in the Methodist conference. In that influence he was closely associated with his two elder brothers, the Revs. John and William Ryerson. The former down to his death in 1878, was respected by the whole conference for his eminent gifts as a legislator and administrator of Methodist polity. All three were active and able promoters of the reunion of the British with the Canadian Wesleyans which took place in 1847, and in the union of the Lower Canada District which took place in 1854. These various unions as well as the growth of the church introduced new elements and new leadership into the church in which three parties might now be distinctly traced. The British members of the conference with such men as Dr. Wood, Dr. Rice and Dr. Evans as prominent representatives constituted an able class of preachers, strongly conservative of all the views and usages of English Methodism. A thoroughly Canadian and progressive section of the conference was led and repre-

sented by such men as the Hurlburts, James Elliott, Jeffers and Spenser; while a more conservative Canadian section was represented by the Ryersons, Green, Jones, and Rose, with such younger men as Sanderson and Nelles. It would not be right to call these sections of the conference parties in the modern sense of the term, for there was no organization or pledged following; and in all the sections there were many men of such strong individuality that they followed no man. But history had given to each of these sections its peculiar tendency and character so definitely that the attitude of each on any great question might be safely predicted. The Ryersons, with the more conservative Canadians, were in general a mediating influence between the British and the more radical Canadians, and in that way did not a little to bring about and cement the unity of the body.

But in 1854 an incident occurred which for a time made Dr. Ryerson appear as the most extreme of radicals in Methodist polity, and even threatened to sever his connection with the conference. An intimate friend, a man whose Methodist lineage reached back to John Wesley's day, a man of spotless Christian character and life, and one active and useful in many fields of Christian work was "dropped" from church membership for non-attendance at class. The circumstance was at once so painful, and, though according to the letter

of the law as well as the practice of the time, so anomalous from the broader point of view, that Dr. Ryerson took up the question with great earnestness, published a pamphlet on the subject, and when his views were not sustained by the majority of the conference, emphasized his protest by tendering his resignation as a minister of the church. In his pamphlet he claimed that membership in the Christian church was a sacred right as inviolable as the rights of citizenship and only forfeited by positive wrong doing. He held that now that Methodism had assumed the status and responsibilities of a church, a condition of membership which was established for a society in the church was no longer the proper test of true church membership, which should be based only upon the requirements of the New Testament. Beyond this he also pressed the right of all baptised children to more definite recognition and admission to the full privileges of church membership.

Dr. Ryerson's presentation of the case made at the time a deep impression upon the younger members of the conference. It certainly contained large elements of truth which were obviously neglected by the Methodism of that day. These truths were emphasized by the constant exercise of a somewhat arbitrary power to drop members from the church roll by simply omitting their names in the copying of the list to a new page at the end of the quarter. Wesley's regulations required that this should be

done only after the cases had been examined in the leaders' meeting and admonition had been duly given. But even this safeguard was now very largely omitted. In the majority of cases where the member had grown careless and no longer valued his position and privilege as a member of the church, it might be that no substantial injustice was done. It was but the lopping off of dead branches which would in time fall off themselves if they had not already done so. But in seasons of ecclesiastical convulsion both in Canada and in England this had without doubt been used as an easy way of getting rid of troublesome persons. On the other hand, up to this time both in Canada and in the old country Methodism laid the emphasis in all her work upon the revival as the important means of filling the ranks of her membership, and upon the class meeting as the manifestation of a living Christian experience. To admit as co-ordinate or even superior to these two fundamentals, the use of catechumen classes and a permanent roll of membership conditioned upon the maintenance of a consistent Christian life, appeared to the old country Methodists and to the more conservative Canadians, and even to many who ranked as progressives, but were intensely earnest in their religious spirit, a most serious forsaking of the old ways. Strong pamphlets were written in reply to Dr. Ryerson's tract, and one important truth was brought into prominence, viz., that Christian fellowship was in the Apostolic

church a co-ordinate means of grace with the Word or teaching of the apostles, the stated seasons of prayer, and the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper. It was recognized as a scriptural ordinance and not simply as a human and prudential institution. On the other hand, from that date onward the legislation of Canadian Methodism moved steadily in the direction of more ample provision and more careful effort to gather the children into the church, and also in the direction of more careful guarding of the sacred right of church membership until finally the class meeting has been placed on a par with the other scriptural means of grace as a condition of membership in the church.

In 1866-7, while making an educational tour of Great Britain and Europe, Dr. Ryerson was once more brought into close touch with English Methodism, and especially with the late honoured William Morley Punshon, then at the height of his fame as a pulpit orator. The acquaintance ripened into fast friendship and resulted in Mr. Punshon's devoting his services for the benefit of Canadian Methodism for the five years following the summer of 1868, perhaps the most effective period of his pulpit and platform work. The impulse given to Canadian Methodism by this term of service can never be fully estimated. He began by attracting crowds of all classes of the population to the old, and hitherto often despised Methodist

chapels. Easily outranking in oratorical powers the men of all other churches, he gave to Methodism an acknowledged status, corresponding to her superior numbers and rapidly increasing wealth and social position. With such a man in their pulpits even men of the world were no longer ashamed to be called Methodists. He made the Methodists respect themselves, and inspired them in all parts of the country with the ambition to erect places of worship commensurate with the work which they were called in the providence of God to perform. He met a crisis in the affairs of Victoria College by helping to establish that institution on the firm foundation of purely voluntary support. He attracted the attention of all branches of Methodism to the larger body, and by his relations to England smoothed the way to those needed adjustments which removed all obstacles to union and finally resulted in the consolidation of Canadian Methodism, first in part in 1874 and in full in 1883.

Into all this work of his chosen friend, Dr. Ryerson entered with the fire and enthusiasm of youth, mingled with the sagacity and wise experience of age. It became a favourite saying of his that one of his most important works for his church and country was the bringing of Mr. Punshon to Canada. With this new inspiration of church life throughout Canadian Methodism, the fifty years' services of Dr. Ryerson for his native land began to be estimated at their true value; while his wisdom

and experience as a legislator placed him in the forefront of the negotiations for the first union. To him no more congenial task could be assigned than the healing of these breaches, which had all occurred in his own lifetime and as the result of struggles in which he himself had borne a prominent part; and when in 1874 the first stage of success was reached, he was by the united voice of all parties to the union, placed in the chair of the first general conference of united Canadian Wesleyan Methodism.

In the constitution of the united church, over which Dr. Ryerson was thus called to preside, two great principles were incorporated which had not previously obtained in the larger bodies composing the union. These were lay representation in the supreme assembly of the church, and a representative general conference for legislation, and the administration of the common connexional work of missions, education and religious literature. It was into this body alone that lay representation was introduced, the executive pastoral functions continuing in the annual conferences whose rights were very carefully guarded. In the hands of these annual courts, and their subordinate courts, district and circuit or station, the administration of the general work of the church was vested. Four departments, missions, education, book and publishing interests, and the support of worn-out ministers and widows were placed under separate bodies corporate, and administered by boards constituted by the

general conference in accordance with their several corporate charters. The president of the general conference presided in these boards, but exercised no general pastoral function in the church at large.

This form of organization continued for nine years, or until the completion of the second union in 1883, and was presided over by Dr. Ryerson from 1874 to 1878. From the beginning it was clearly seen that the solidarity and connexional spirit of the whole church were seriously imperilled by such a constitution. Even uniformity in the administration of the law and discipline of the church could scarcely be secured where the annual presidency changed yearly, and where, as in the east and west, historic traditions and usages had been somewhat different. The compactness, and, within the law of the discipline, the complete autonomy of the annual conferences, gave them, on the other hand, great efficiency in the building up of all local interests, and under strong leadership could easily make them a unit in their vote and influence in the general conference. The one influence to counterbalance these strong tendencies was the strength of the men at the head of the general conference administration, and their ability to reach the whole church at least every year.

The following extract from a letter to Dr. Ryerson from the late Dr. Punshon will illustrate this point:—"I am looking with some solicitude to the result of the appeal to the quarterly meetings

on the union question. I hope it will be carried, though your modifications of the scheme do not quite meet my approval, as one who would like to see a statesman's view taken of things. I do not see the bond of cohesion twenty years hence when those who are now personally known to and therefore interested in each other, have passed off the stage. Then the general conference will meet as perfect strangers, having hardly a common interest but that of a common name, and as there are no general superintendents who know all the conferences there will not be, as in the States, any link to bind them together."

The history of the first and even of the second quadrennium was on these accounts very much of the nature of an experiment, and did not afford to Dr. Ryerson such an opportunity as would have made his large experience and great administrative ability most widely useful to the church. But as opportunity offered he gave most freely of his ability to the services of the church, and was found once more not only presiding over the great church boards and attending their great anniversary meetings, but also occupying the prominent pulpits of the church to lend assistance both in connexional and local work. His work in this way and still more that of his successor, the eloquent Dr. Douglas, did much to prepare the way for conferring larger powers on the chief executive officer at the second union.

One of the most interesting and important duties

imposed upon Dr. Ryerson by the general conference was a visit to England as representative of the Methodist Church of Canada to the British Wesleyan Methodist Conference. This mission he accomplished in the summer of 1876. Forty-three years earlier he had occupied a similar position for the first time, and thrice since he had been deputed to the same honourable duty. On this last visit his dignified and venerable appearance, his courteous manners, his eloquent and impressive address, and above all, the rich fulness of matter furnished by the experience of fifty years in the Christian ministry all combined to make his appearance before the conference an unusually marked event.

Apart from his duties as representative, his time in England was largely occupied in the collection of material for the completion of his last great work, the history of the United Empire Loyalists, to which we have already referred. Visiting the London annual conference assembled in Guelph there was laid upon him another literary labour, in response to which he prepared a most valuable volume entitled the "Epochs of Canadian Methodism," also already referred to in these pages.

There was now wanting but one year before the next assembly of the general conference, and already its important interests were engaging his earnest attention. His experience had deepened the conviction of the necessity of some form of general superintendency by which the community of interest

and unity of action of the whole church might be more fully maintained. At the same time in the several conferences there were forming strong democratic tendencies and most pronounced opposition to any policy of greater centralization. The final conflict on this point did not take place until after Dr. Ryerson's death. But even as early as 1878 the opposing forces were cohering into defined parties and policies under able and active leadership. The general conference held in Montreal in 1878 was thus one of significant importance, starting as it did some of the movements which almost suddenly culminated in action, and in the union of the several annual and two general conferences of 1882 and 1883. Before these years with their strenuous conflict and victory for union and greater solidarity arrived, Dr. Ryerson had passed to his rest. It is therefore a matter of greater interest to trace his active part in the legislation of the preceding conference of 1878 which proved to be his last general conference.

As retiring president he opened the conference with an address in which, after sketching the history and growth of Methodism during his fifty years of ministerial life, he thus refers to the changes which he regards as necessary for its effective constitution:—"I doubt not you will deem it necessary to revise and improve the system of the transfer of the preachers from one part of the conferential work to another when judged necessary, as the

experiment of a transfer committee introduced four years ago has proved cumbrous, expensive and inefficient. Equally, if not more important will it be for you to supply some principle or authority of connexional unity, as at present our connection consists of a mere *congeries* of co-ordinate annual conferences, and your president is the mere chairman of the general conference and is not even a member of any annual conference except that from which he happens to have been elected. The oneness and unity of the body of the church obviously requires not merely a figurehead, but a real head, like that of the natural body, as illustrated by the example of the Methodist church both in England and in the United States."

The two points thus referred to were intimately related. The men who are called from one part of the work to another are generally the men of mark. They become known in all parts of the church. By their personal knowledge of the different sections and great centres of the work, they acquire a broader interest and a wider outlook than if they spent their whole life in a single conference and were always identified with its interests. Nothing is more conducive to the unity of interest and to broad sympathy in all parts of the church than this free circulation of the strongest men throughout the work. If they breathe the free air of the west, if they feel the full life of the great cities with their manifold moral need, if they come into contact

with the great problems of different races and faiths, if from the seaports of the east they learn to look out upon the whole world, they cannot but carry with them throughout the church the influence of this varied life, and so bring its various sections into sympathy with each other. A general superintendency brings the power of one man to bear upon this problem of unification; a free transfer brings the power of scores of such to bear in the same direction. At best, the general superintendent can be but a passing visitor. The transferred pastor, on the other hand, remains long enough both to take in and to transmit the spirit of his successive environments.

But, accustomed as Dr. Ryerson had been all his life to strong leadership and central government, the superintendency appeared to him at present the most important need of the church. Two facts since demonstrated by history were not then so fully manifest. Individual leadership was weakening. The great leaders of the past, men who had entered the ministry in the twenties and the thirties were on the eve of passing. Ryerson himself, Green, Carroll, Douse, Evans, Rose, James Elliott, George Young, J. H. Robinson, Borland, were members of a general conference for the last time, Lachlin Taylor was present only as a visitor, and Asahel Hurlburt, elected a member, died before the session. The younger men, even if equal in ability, could not wield the same influence in the

larger sphere and over men who were more nearly their equals in intellectual power. On the other hand, constitutional forces were increasing in influence and becoming far more powerful and important than individual men. The transfer system and the status and attitude of the annual conference were thus more important questions than the general superintendency, and as the result has proved much more difficult to solve.

Early in the conference Dr. Ryerson gave notice of motion on the subject of a virtual superintendency as follows:—"That the president of the general conference shall devote his time, as far as possible, in visiting every part of the work; that he shall be considered a member of each of the several annual conferences, and when present at their sessions shall preside over their proceedings; and that the president of each annual conference shall preside over its proceedings in the absence of the president of the general conference."

A discussion of this resolution resulted only in provision for such assistance to the president of the general conference as would enable him to give more time to travel throughout the church, but gave him no status in the annual conference. The subject of transfers was taken up by younger legislators but no very substantial progress was made towards its solution. Both of these important questions thus stood over for the second union.

The close of the general conference was virtually

the close of Dr. Ryerson's active ministerial life. In 1879 after fifty-four years' active work, the longest period on record in Canadian Methodism, he took his place on the list of superannuates, being now in the seventy-sixth year of his age. His remaining days were spent in the quiet of his home near the scene of his life work, and in visits to the home of his boyhood and to his aged brother. As strength permitted he continued his literary work almost to the last, often assisted by younger friends who counted it a privilege to be associated with a great and good man in the closing labours of his life. Into the beautiful scenes of affectionate tenderness and Christian hope of these last days it would not become this work to enter. They belong rather to the field of personal and religious biography. But we cannot forbear to copy the words in which his lifelong friend and co-labourer, Dr. Hodgins, depicts the final scene:—

"To such a man death had no terrors, the heart had no fear. It was cheering and comforting to listen to him (as I often did alone) and to hear him speak of his near departure as of one preparing for a journey, ceasing from duty in order to be ready to be conveyed away and then resuming it when the journey was over. Thus he spoke of the time of his departure as at hand, and he was ready for the messenger when he should call for him. He spoke of it trustfully, hopefully, cheerfully, neither anxious nor fearful, and yet, on the other hand,

neither elated nor full of joy. But he knew in whom he had trusted, and was persuaded, and was not afraid of evil tidings either of the dark valley or of the river of death. He knew whom he believed, and was persuaded that He was able to keep that which he had committed unto Him against that day.

"Thus the end drew near, and with it, as the outward man began to fail, the feeling of unwavering trust and confidence was deepened and strengthened. At length hearing failed, and the senses one by one partially ceased to perform their functions. Then to him were fully realized the inspired words of Solomon: 'Desire failed, and the silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl was broken, the pitcher broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern.' Gradually the weary wheels of life stood still, and at seven o'clock on Sunday morning February 19th, 1882, in the presence of his loved ones and dear friends, gently and peacefully the spirit of Egerton Ryerson took its flight."

After such a life the pageant of a funeral and the pomp of monumental grandeur are empty trifles. But to honour him in his death, as he had served them in his life the whole country seemed assembled in its representatives. Government house, legislative halls, the bench of judges, university and academic authorities, ecclesiastical dignitaries of all names, thousands from the schools which he had founded, and above all, the common people

for whose cause he never failed to stand, followed to the grave the remains of the great Canadian who had lived so faithfully and well for his country.

"Hush, the dead march wails in the people's ears;
The dark crowd moves, and there are sobs and tears;
The black earth yawns, the mortal disappears;
Ashes to ashes, dust to dust;
He is gone who seemed so great,—
Gone; but nothing can bereave him
Of the force he made his own
Being here, and we believe him
Something far advanced in state,
And that he wears a truer crown
Than any wreath that man can weave him."

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